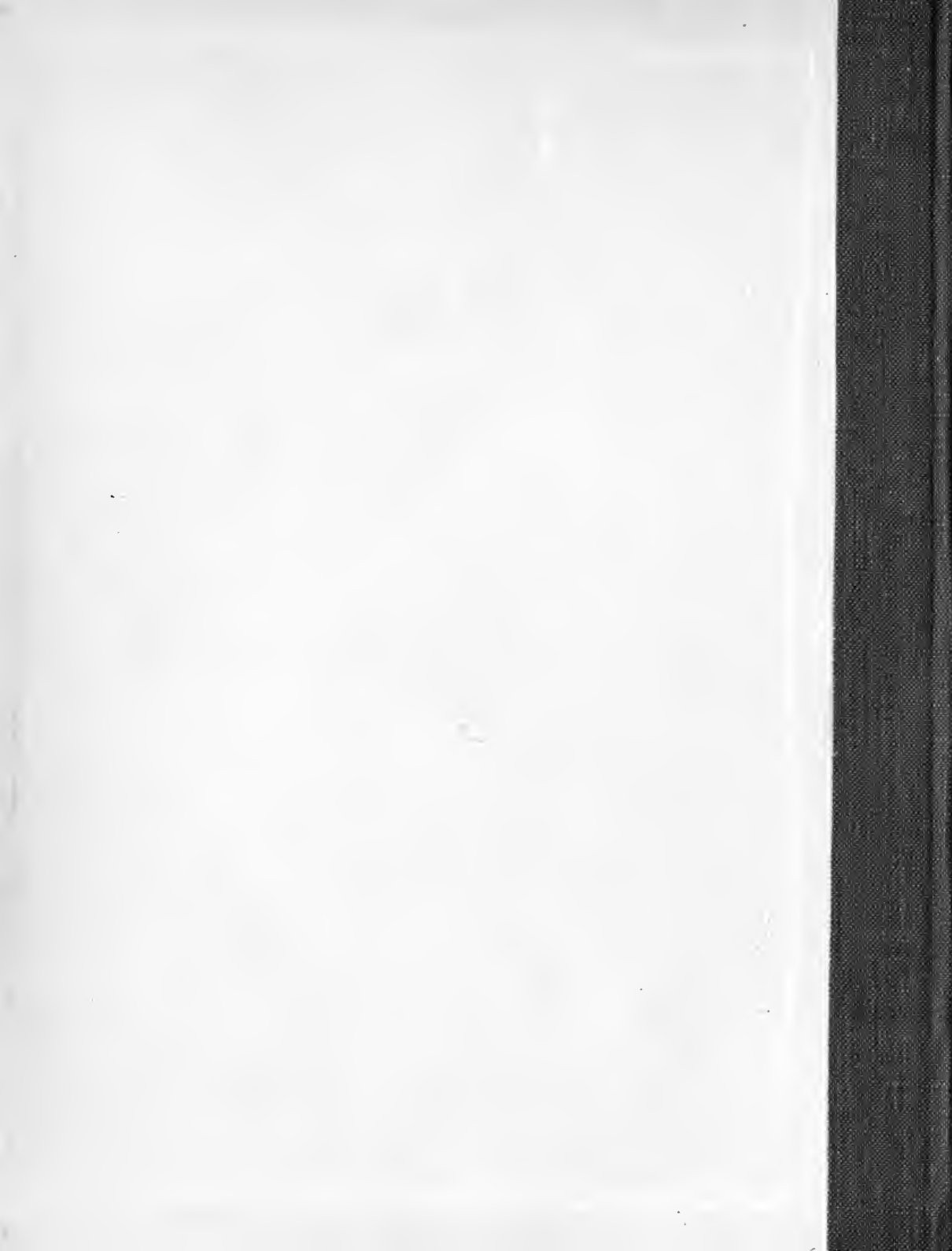
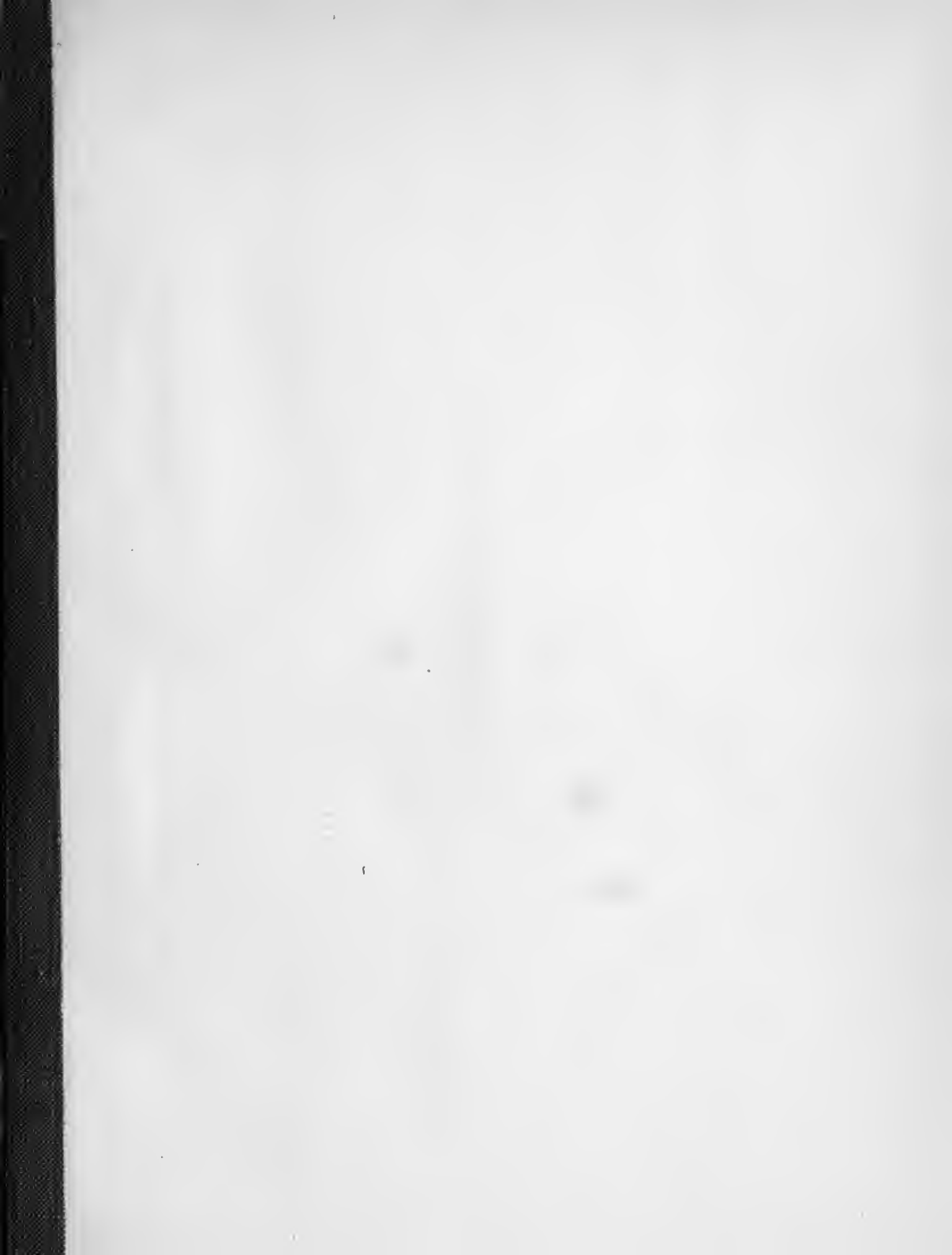




3 1761 06838758 8

UNIVERSITY  
TORONTO  
LIBRARY











Publications of the Spenser Society.

*Issue No. 33.*

---

# PARALLELOGRAMMATON.

BY

GEORGE WITHER.

PRINTED FOR THE SPENSER SOCIETY.

---

1882.

# The Spenser Society.

---

## COUNCIL.

JAMES CROSSLEY, Esq., F.S.A., *President*.  
Rev. W. E. BUCKLEY, M.A., Middleton Cheney.  
JOHN LEIGH, Esq.  
G. H. MIDWOOD, Esq.  
G. W. NAPIER, Esq.  
THOMAS SCHOFIELD, Esq.  
JOSEPH THOMPSON, Esq.  
RICHARD JOHNSON, Esq., *Treasurer*.  
RICHARD WOOD, Esq., *Hon. Secretary*.

---

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS.

---

*Issue*

*For the First Year 1867-8.*

1. The Proverbs and Epigrams of John Heywood. Reprinted from the Original Edition of 1562.
2. The Works of John Taylor the Water Poet. Reprinted from the Folio Edition of 1630. *Part I.*

*For the Second Year 1868-9.*

3. The Works of John Taylor the Water Poet. Reprinted from the Folio of 1630. *Part II.*
4. The Works of John Taylor the Water Poet. Reprinted from the Folio of 1630. *Part III. (Completing the volume.)*
5. Zepheria. Reprinted from the Original Edition of 1594.

*For the Third Year 1869-70.*

6. The 'ΕΚΑΤΟΜΠΛΑΘΙΑ or Passionate Centurie of Love, by Thomas Watson. Reprinted from the Original Edition of (*circa*) 1581.
7. Works of John Taylor the Water Poet, not included in the Folio Volume of 1630. Reprinted from the Original Editions. *First Collection.*



1877/8

# PARALLELOGRAMMATON.

BY  
GEORGE WITHER.

570792  
31.8.39

PRINTED FOR THE SPENSER SOCIETY.

1882.



PRINTED BY CHARLES E. SIMMS,  
MANCHESTER.

PR

2392

P3

1882

## PARALLOGRAMMATON.

AN EPISTLE to the three Nations of *England, Scotland, and Ireland*; whereby their Sins being *Parallel'd* with those of *Judah* and *Israel*, they are forewarned, and exhorted to a timely *Repentance*, lest they incur the like Condemnation.

To render it the more effectual, some Considerable *Notions* are therein expressed touching *Ceremonies*, and things *indifferent*: The *L O R D's Supper*: The *Civil Government*: The taking of *Oaths*: The *Mark of the Beast*: The *Liberty of Conscience*: The *great Sabbath*; and the *Two Witneses*, with other Particulars of Concernment interwoven.

---

Written by *G E O. W I T H E R.*

---

If this be not of *G O D*, 'tis *evil*,  
And was inspired by the *Devil*;  
But whence it was, it will be known:  
For, that which is of *G O D*, hee'l own.

---

Ezek. 3. 17.

*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to these Nations; Therefore according to my Word, give them Warning from me. If thou warn them, and they turn not from their wickedness, they shall surely die in their iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy Soul.*

*Be not afraid of them, nor of their words, nor of their looks, though they be a rebellious People, and as Bryars and Thorns unto thee, Ezek. 2. 6.*

---

Imprinted MDCLXII years after the Birth of Christ,  
to prepare for the year MDCLXVI after his Passion.

---



---

The Printer to the Reader.

**T**He Author *hereof* intending whilst he was Prisoner in Newgate, that this Epistle should be committed to any one, who would honestly and conscientiously undertake the Publication thereof; it came a while after the date, to my hands. But, finding it not authorized to be imprinted, I was for a time, fearful to make an Impression thereof: yet, having seriously perused it, I thought the same so pertinent to GOD's Glory and the present condition of these Nations, not to permit such necessary Precautions, Forewarnings and Exhortations to be smothered, that I have adventured upon what such a seeming Transgression may make me liable unto; hoping (there being no prohibition to the contrary) the publick benefit will more than recompence the offence, if it shall be offensive to any, in regard I have done it conscientiously, and not in contempt of Orders, which are otherwise (by ingogitancy or casualty) obstructive to their own good intentions by whom they are made. Let therefore the Approvableness of the matter, and my well-meaning, excuse me; and let us make such good use thereof, that we may be all the more excusable to GOD and men. This is all I have to say, but, that it was not my fault it could not be finished at the Press until this third day of May, 1662, being long time after the date of the Epistle. So Farewel.

This for a *Postscript* hereunto I'll add,  
Which from the *Author*, by report, I've had.  
*He that this Book, by parcels doth peruse,*  
*May both the Author and himself abuse.*

A 2

In

---

*In the way of this Address to his own Countrymen, the Author humbly tenders this following Epigram, To the Pastors, Elders, and other Members, of the French and Dutch Congregations, inhabiting within the Islands of Great Britain.*

I Have but seen your *Countries*, (not yet known  
Their *Constitution*, as I do mine own)  
And, therefore justly cannot to your *Nations*,  
As I might unto these, make Applications.  
But, they and we have been professed *One*  
In *Faith* and *Christian Love*, some years now gone ;  
And, I shall do the best of my endeavour,  
That so again it may be, and for ever.

The *Jewish Prophets* very often hinted,  
What, being heeded well, might have prevented  
The *Judgments*, afterward, inflicted on  
*Egypt, Damascus, Tyre, and Babylon*,  
With other *Neighbouring Nations* : So might I,  
Had I the self-same gift of *Prophecy*,  
Prefage to you, what darkly I foresee  
Their *Lot*, in probability, will be,  
When we have drawn forth our, unless with heed  
They seek how to avert what may succeed,  
And prosecute, what *Prudence* doth require,  
When men behold their Neighbours house on fire.

Your *Countries* may perhaps, discern by this,  
Some things that are among themselves amiss ;  
And by the *Constellations* in our sphere,  
What *Exhalations* are engendering there.  
If you so think, and shall it not contemn,  
Let it communicated be to them ;

For,

For, whatfoere I either seem, or am,  
From whom, to you, these *Premonitions* came,  
They may be of concernment, and are sent  
In hearty Love, and with a good intent.  
If you with Love vouchsafe them good regard,  
I have my whole aim, and a full reward.

The sev'ral *Churches* and the sev'ral *States*  
Of *Protestants*, will have the self-same *Fates*  
Throughout all *Europe*, with small difference,  
Unless they in another mode commence,  
Than yet they do ; and sensible become  
Of that, which they are lately fallen from :  
For, *self-love*, and neglecting of *each other*,  
Will *singly* ruine all, or, *altogether*.

I somewhat have to utter, (if G O D shall  
Enable me) to those without our *Pale* :  
But, they so wholly seem to have forgot  
*Piedmonts* late Case, and *Germany's* sad Lot,  
That they must see a *Storm* again appear,  
Before ought can be spoke, that they will hear.  
Our *Corosives* (if ev'r we shall be so)  
Have made us fit, that *Plaisters* may unto  
Our *Ulcers* be apply'd. They smart and prick ;  
I therefore am become an *Emperick*,  
And, this *Catholicon* (as it befalls)  
Was pressed from between the *Prison walls*,  
Which is not only at this time a *Den*  
Of *Thieves*, but also, cram'd with *honest men*.

Newgate,  
March 8.  
1662.

Your Servant in the Love  
of Christ Jesus,

*George Wither.*

P A R A L-

---

 P A R A L L E L O G R A M M A T O N .

An *Epistle Exhortatory and Premonitory* to all the Nations in the three *Kingdoms* of *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, with the Dominions and Territories to them belonging.

*The Muses language suits with few of those  
Who most need this ; I therefore now in Prose  
Express my mind. My Pen, LORD, so direct,  
That what I write may have some good effect.*

**G**EORGE WITHER, an unworthy Servant of *Jesus Christ* and of all his *Servants*, ( called through that Anointing of the *holy Spirit*, whereby every true Professor of *Christianity* is qualified for the work of his *Generation*) wisheth Grace and Peace in the same *Christ Jesus*, to all the Inhabitants of *England, Scotland and Ireland*, with the *Colonies and Territories* to them belonging. *Providence*, dearly beloved Brethren, hath so disposed of me, that I have neither *Civil* nor *Martial employment*, as heretofore ; nor *Parochial, Congregational, or Oeconomical* charge incumbent upon me, or so much as any certain place of Residence upon Earth, (except a Prison) confining me to a local or particular duty relating to others ; nor Estate or Affairs in the world to intangle me : Therefore, being a *Freeman* in the *Spirit*, though in corporeal Bands for discharging my Conscience, and obeying  
GOD



G O D rather than *Men* ; (and left at large in respect of other obligations) I conceive myself bound to bestow the little remainder of my life in some *National Services*, whereby G O D may be glorified, my *Brethren* edified, and my *Country* preserved from destruction. I am not altogether unknown unto you : For, I undertook long since, to be a *Remembrancer* to these Islands of *Great Britain*, with a Resolution to execute that *Office*, whilst I lived, as just occasions and opportunities should from time to time be offered, so far forth as G O D shall give me grace ; And I do now by this *Premonitory* and *Exhortatory Epistle*, exhibit to your serious considerations, that which *Providence* hath lately offered unto mine ; preaching in my *Laymode*, the Doctrine of *Repentance*, which is to us as necessary to prepare the way of our L O R D *Christ* at this near approach of his *second Coming*, as it was in that *Generation* whereto it was preached by *John the Baptist* at his *first Coming* in the flesh. That *Premonitor* was *single* in his *work*, being thereto extraordinarily designed and qualified : I am but one among many, thereto fitted in some degree by G O D's ordinary dispensations : Nevertheless, by a *Medium*, having an Allusion to his imitation, though much differing from it : For, as he was prepared for his work in that *Generation*, by returning from conversing among men, into a desolate place or *Wilderness* ; so, I have been prepared for that which I have to do, by conversing among men in the world ; And, as he finished his *Life* and *Testimony* against the corruption of his *Generation* in a *Prison*, so peradventure must I ; yea, without peradventure, if G O D himself prevents it not, with whose good pleasure I shall be well pleased. Suffer me therefore with your patience to prosecute

cute my work, and let it not be supposed that I have herein acted without *Commission* ; nor let this Allusion to *John Baptist*, be misconstrued, as if I thereby arrogated or sought to insinuate an opinion that I am somewhat more than I am ; for, I conceive my self to be one of the *least in the Kingdom of Heaven*, and to be by the Grace of G O D onely that which I *am*, having neither *Mission* nor *Commission*, but that of GOD's *Word* and *Spirit*, whereby every true Servant of his is qualified, called, and authorized, to prosecute the particular *Services*, whereto he is appointed in his *Time* and *Place*.

During five or six eminent *Publick Changes* for about sixty years together, I have had place, means and opportunity (otherwhile as a *private*, and sometimes as a *publick person*) to be an ocular or an ear-witness of many of the most *signal transactions* in these three *Nations*, relating to their general *well* or *ill being* ; and was also a diligent Observer (somewhat sooner than most other men of my years) of the Peoples Manners in private, aswell concerning G O D as *Men*, even in persons of all Degrees and Professions from the highest to the lowest inclusively ; as may partly appear, by those *Observations*, *Oriations*, and *Reproofs*, which I have heretofore published from time to time ; and for which I began to suffer, as I now do, nigh fifty years past. But, my Endeavours having had little good effect hitherto, notwithstanding the various and manifold *inter-changes* of *Judgments* and *Mercies*, wherewithal G O D hath provoked us, (nor by the frequent Applications which his *Ministers* have made of them as occasions were offered) I not thinking myself discharged from what I undertook, am willing to adventure the loss of more labour to prevent  
(if

(if it be possible) that which I fear may ensue : And to that end am induced to add this *Expedient*, hoping and believing, that some of this Generation will be hereby awakened out of their security, when they have herewithal considered in how many evident Particulars, GOD hath verified my *Presages* to these *Nations*, lately and long ago published, when there was little fear of such Events. The *Generality*, in my apprehension, is more infatuated and much more wicked than when I first took notice of the world, and so in snarled with all manner of *Confusions* in things both *Divine* and *Civil*, that, unless we speedily and more strenuously return to G O D by *Repentance*, *Faith* and *Prayer*, that we may be disentangled, all the great hopes of the Temporal Prosperity, which is by some lately conceived, will quite fail them, and all the severe *Judgments* heretofore inflicted upon our true Types, *Judah* and *Israel*, will be shortly executed upon us. I heartily pray we may escape them, and to that intent, forewarn you by *these Presents*, before it is too late ; Not being thereto moved by such *Phanatick Impulses*, as those are by some judged to be, whereby GOD hath enclined many of his *Servants* (on whom you impose contemptible names ) in various Modes, to awaken you out of your dreams and security : But, I have attempted it, upon those *Motives*, whereby they and I have been warrantably provoked to be *Remembrancers* for your weal and safety, though maligned and persecuted for our good will : and that which inclined me to write unto you in this manner, was thus occasioned.

I lately making use of my ordinary Contemplative Object, the *written Word of G O D*, the better to preserve my *Faith* and *Dependance* in and upon him in

B

these

these my *Bands* ; and having in particular refreshed my memory with what the Prophets left recorded touching the Prevarications of the Children of *Israel*, and the Inhabitants of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, on whom the Judgments fore-declared were afterward inflicted for their obstinate impenitence ; I perceived them to be so like us, and we so like them, both in our transgressions and wilfulness, that the Contemplation thereof moved me to make this *Premonitory Address* ; and to preface it with such *Preoccupations* as I thought needful ; and a brief Recapitulation of those *Omissions* and *Commissions*, wherewith I found the *Jews* to have been charged by their own *Prophets* : hoping, the Exemplification of such *Premonitions*, so authorized, and having such notorious Events, shall so prevail, that when you have observed, *what they did, what you have done*, (and find it testified by your own Consciences, how you parallel them in the same and the like sins) you will not be so stupid, as to think, if you continue in them, that you can possibly escape the like *Judgements* ; in regard, as the *Crimes* are the same, or equivalent, so, you have the same *Accusers*, and the same *Judge*, with not a few *Witnesses* and Aggravations of your Guiltiness. *Reade, hear and heed* then, what *Impeachments* the Prophets of *GOD* have in several times drawn up against his own *chosen People*, with what was threatned and befel them afterward, for their perverseness and impenitency.

‘ The Prophet *Isaiah* personates the *LORD*, accusing them to be, *Rebellious Children, an ignorant inconsiderate People, laden with Iniquity ; A seed of evil doers, corrupting each other, perverse in their ways to the provoking of his Anger and still more*  
and

' and more apostatizing, notwithstanding their frequent  
 ' corrections and fatherly admonitions. That, they were  
 ' head-sick, heart-sick, and unsound in every part from  
 ' head to foot. That, nothing would work upon them  
 ' to amendment; insomuch, that but for a Remnant,  
 ' which he had preserved among them, they had been  
 ' like Sodom and Gomorrah. The said Prophet tes-  
 ' tifies, that they had made their *Worship of G O D*,  
 ' their *Sacrifices* and all their outward services of  
 ' him (even those which he himself had commanded)  
 ' to be as abominable, or as little regarded, as those  
 ' which he required not at their hands. That, their  
 ' Princes and Judges were rebellious, the companions  
 ' of Robbers; lovers of Bribes, and Oppressors of the  
 ' Poor, the Fatherless and Widows. That, they pol-  
 ' luted themselves with bloody defilements; were  
 ' guilty of a whorish unfaithfulness to G O D; were  
 ' covetous and cruel to Men; Trusters to Vanities  
 ' and Lyes; wicked in their imaginations and Pra-  
 ' tices; and that by their manifold Transgressions  
 ' they had made a separation between GOD and them.  
 ' Isa. Ch. 1. he upbraids them, with following the vain  
 ' customs and fashions of other Nations; with multi-  
 ' plying (their Militia) their Garisons, and with their  
 ' gross Idolatries. Chap. 2. he reproves them for their  
 ' haughty looks, for the iniquity of their words & actions;  
 ' for their impudence in sinning; for the insolency of  
 ' their Children, and for the imperiousness of their Wo-  
 ' men, upon whose petulancies he much insisting, rec-  
 'kons up at least twenty of their feminine Gewgaws  
 ' and Baubles, such as with us are multiplied into al-  
 ' most twenty times as many; not omitting, their  
 ' discover'd necks, their wandring eyes, their affected  
 ' gestures or paces, nor the tingling of their shooes or  
 B 2 *slippers;*

*'slippers ; as if such vanities in their Women were*  
*'to be a sign to other Nations in after Ages, that some*  
*'destructive Change, was approaching unto them,*  
*'whose Women were become extraordinarily immodest,*  
*'and addicted to new fangles. Chap. 3. he*  
*'brands them, with bringing forth Oppression, when*  
*'Righteousness was expected ; with the sin of depopulation,*  
*'by laying House to House, and Land to Land,*  
*'until there was no place left for the poor ; with their*  
*'early rising to be drunk, and continuing at the Wine*  
*'till night ; with excess in Feastings and Musick in*  
*'times of general Calamity, without considering the*  
*'necessities and afflictions of G O D's People, or what*  
*'he had done for them ; he reproves them, for their*  
*'scoffings, for their slighting the Works and Counsels*  
*'of the Holy One of Israel ; for calling good, evil,*  
*'and evil, good ; for putting darkness for light, and*  
*'light for darkness ; for being wise in their own conceits only,*  
*'and for justifying the Wicked, and condemning the Innocent. Chap. 5. He blames them,*  
*'for not returning to GOD when he chastised them,*  
*'and impeaches their Princes and Prophets, for leading*  
*'the People to destruction, chap. 9. He impeaches*  
*'their Pastors and Watchmen of Blood-guiltiness and*  
*'Ignorance, terming them greedy, sleepy, and dumb*  
*'dogs, hunting after game, and filling themselves*  
*'with strong drink. Chap. 46. He reproves their*  
*'neglect of Justice and Mercy, their hypocritical*  
*'Fasts, and meer formal Humiliations. Chap. 58.*  
*'He charges them also, with musing vanities, with*  
*'plotting mischiefs, with speaking lies, with swiftness*  
*'to shed innocent blood, with neglecting G O D's*  
*'wayes, and prosecuting their own crooked paths,*  
*'Chap. 59. This is part of Isaiah's Charge ; and*  
*where-*

‘wherefore was it recorded but for our warning and  
‘instruction?

‘The Prophet *Jeremy* adding his Testimony, wit-  
‘nesseth their *Ingratitude, Apostacies and Oppressions*.  
‘Chap. 2. Mentions *their sottish unaptness to every*  
‘*good act, and their proneness to that which is evil*.  
‘Chap. 4. Accuses them particularly, of *Perjury, of*  
‘*swearing by false Gods, of Fornications, Adulteries,*  
‘*and assembling by troops in Brothel-houses; and ex-*  
‘*presses the brutishness of their lusts, by neighing after*  
‘*their Neighbours Wives, like full-fed horses*. He  
‘brands them, as *Isa* did, for being a rebellious people,  
‘fearless of *G O D*, betrayers and insnarers of Men;  
‘for having uncircumcised ears; for being covetous,  
‘disaffected in the wayes of *G O D*, and for out-acting  
‘even the wicked in their wickedness. Chapters 5,  
‘and 6. he charges them with confiding in Lyes, with  
‘depending upon a meer formal Profession of Holiness,  
‘and with a vain conceit, that their having the  
‘Temple of the *LORD* among them, should sanctifie  
‘them and make them acceptable, notwithstanding all  
‘their Hypocrisie, Idolatry and Prophaneſs. Chap. 7.  
‘he upbraids them with perpetuated back-slidings, ob-  
‘stinate impenitence, with surpassing brute creatures  
‘in their brutishness, with self-conceit and self-will,  
‘to the rejecting the Wisdom of *G O D*; and with  
‘being, from the highest to the lowest, even Priests  
‘and Prophets, false and deceitful in their hearts,  
‘tongues and practices; in regard whereof, he advi-  
‘seth every man to beware of his neighbour, Chap-  
‘ters 8 and 9. And in his 10th Chap. complains, that  
‘both People and Pastors were brutish. He complains  
‘also, that they encouraged each other to smite him  
‘with the tongue, that is, to slander him, (probably  
like

' like those in our dayes, who confederate in defaming  
 ' the Servants and Messengers of G O D , that their  
 ' premonitious Reproofs and wholsom Cautions might  
 ' be the less regarded. Chap. 18. he records the  
 ' cancelling and burning *his Roll of Prophecies, by the*  
 ' *hand of their King* ( which was well done, as by  
 ' the hand of the Hangman) *with an intent to suppress*  
 ' *his Testimony against their Wickedness, published*  
 ' *by him upon a day of humiliation, wherein they hypo-*  
 ' *critically pretended to seek G O D by Prayer and*  
 ' *Fasting.* Chap. 36. he testifies *against their hypo-*  
 ' *critical asking counsel of him concerning their de-*  
 ' *parting out of their own Country into Egypt, and then*  
 ' *doing the contrary to what he advised them in the*  
 ' *Name of G O D ;* and declares *the malepartness of*  
 ' *their Women, in justifying their Superstition* ( and  
 ' *Idolotrous huswifery) in making spice Cakes for the*  
 ' *Queen of Heaven* (blasphemously so called) *and*  
 ' *their wicked ascribing to that Idol, the blessing of*  
 ' *Plenty, which they enjoyed* ( by G O D's mercifull  
 ' long-suffering and bounty) *in the times of their pre-*  
 ' *dominant Idolatry and Prosperity,* Chap. 44.

' The Prophet *Ezekiel* brought in a large Impeach-  
 ' ment also, against them, and by a Commission from  
 ' G O D , arraigned them *for Rebellion, and Stub-*  
 ' *bornness,* chap. 2. Accused *their Prophets of Folly,*  
 ' *Deceit, lying Divinations, and of pretending to speak*  
 ' *as from G O D , when he had not spoken by them :*  
 ' Charges them *with neglecting to make up the Brea-*  
 ' *ches of Israel ; daubing with untimpered mortar,*  
 ' *and deluding the People with promises of Peace ;*  
 ' *when Destruction was imminent.* Chap. 13. he in-  
 ' dicted them *of Ingratefully giving those good things,*  
 ' *which G O D had gratioously bestowed on them, to his*  
 Enemies,



' *Enemies, and to ingratiate themselves with their*  
 ' *Adultrous Lovers ; laying also to their charge the*  
 ' *horrible sin of sacrificing their Children to Molech,*  
 ' Chap. 16. *and, with imputing Injustice to G O D,*  
 ' *as if he punished men for sins not committed by them ;*  
 ' *and children, for those transgressions of their fathers*  
 ' *whereof they were not guilty.* Chap. 18. He ac-  
 ' *cuses the Princes of Bloodshed, the People of Disobe-*  
 ' *dience to Parents, of oppressing Strangers, the Fa-*  
 ' *therless and the Widow ; of despising and prophaning*  
 ' *Holy things ; of making Debate by Tale-bearing ; of*  
 ' *Incests, Fornications and Adulteries ; of unsatiable*  
 ' *Lustings ; of Extortions, Usury, and of wholly for-*  
 ' *getting GOD.* Chap. 23. He complains, *that they*  
 ' *pretended to Godliness, and to a desire of being di-*  
 ' *rected and taught by GOD's Prophets, whereas they*  
 ' *intended it not, neither gave much more regard unto*  
 ' *them, than to Balladsingers and Fiddlers, (or in words*  
 ' *to that effect) chap. 33.* He testifies, *that their*  
 ' *Shepherds fed themselves with the fat of their*  
 ' *Flocks, and clothed themselves with their wool ;*  
 ' *but neither fed those that were hungry, nor streng-*  
 ' *thened those that were weak, nor cured those that*  
 ' *were sick, nor bound up that which was broken, nor*  
 ' *sought out that which was lost, nor brought home*  
 ' *that which went astray ; but, ruling over them by*  
 ' *force and cruelty, caused the Flocks to be scattered,*  
 ' *and wander throughout the Earth,* Chapt. 34.  
 ' Consider to whom this may be applied ; and who,  
 ' *as they did, have set their thresholds by God's thre-*  
 ' *sholds, and their posts by his posts, as it is said the*  
 ' *Jews did, Ezck. 43.*

' The Prophet *Daniel* confesseth in his Prayer, *that*  
 ' *their Kings, their Princes, their Fathers, and the*  
 whole

' *whole house of Iſrael, had been tranſgreſſors againſt*  
 ' *G O D's Laws, and deſpiſers of his Prophets and*  
 ' *Servants.*

' The Prophet *Hofea* calls them, *the Children of*  
 ' *Whoredom, and Covenant-breakers.* Hof. chap. 2.  
 ' He charges them, *with being inconfiderate of their*  
 ' *own wayes, corrupters of their Kings, by making them*  
 ' *ſport, and rejoycing their hearts with wickedneſs,*  
 ' *and delighting their Princes with lyes.* That, upon  
 ' *their Feſtivals they made their Kings* (or them-  
 ' ſelves or both) *ſick with Bottles of Wine*; meaning  
 ' as I conceive, that they were drunk: For, it is uſually  
 ' ſaid that *Great men* are ſick, when they are diſtem-  
 ' pered with drink; and poor men drunk; and per-  
 ' adventure they then drank healths, as in theſe times,  
 ' until they had by drinking healths to others, drunk  
 ' away their own health. The ſame Prophet ſayes  
 ' alſo, *that they cauſed their Kings to ſtretch out their*  
 ' *hands to Scorners*: which may peradventure ſigni-  
 ' fie the giving of their hands to be kiſſed by unworthy  
 ' perſons, as a teſtimony that they are in their favour.  
 ' He further charges them, *to be Adulterers, heated*  
 ' *with Luſt like Ovens*; and *that their Kings and*  
 ' *Judges were apoſtatized through neglect of G O D.*  
 ' Chap. 7. *That they had likewise ſet up Kings which*  
 ' *he intended not to ſet over them, and ſuch Princes*  
 ' *as he approved not of,* (which ſin Samuel laid alſo to  
 ' their charge, when they deſired a King like other  
 ' Nations.) Moreover, he impeaches them, *for Cove-*  
 ' *nant-breaking*; *for tranſgreſſing againſt the Laws of*  
 ' *their Maker, and being forgetful of him, and be-*  
 ' *come ſtrangers unto him*; *for building ſuch Tem-*  
 ' *ples, and making ſuch Fortifications as he approved*  
 ' *not of,* Chap. 8. And addeth, *that they were a Vine*  
 bearing

' bearing fruit to themselves onely ; That, they had  
' sworn falsely in their Covenants, plowed for wicked-  
' nefs, reaped Iniquity, fed upon the fruit of Lyes,  
' and confided in their own strength and Policy, chap.  
' 10.

' Joel particularizeth such Judgments as were ap-  
' proaching for their sins ; and exhorts them to speedy  
' Repentance.

' Amos complains, that neither Judgements nor  
' Mercies prevailed to reform them ; That, their  
' sins had made their Fasts, Oblations, and other pious  
' duties, abominable to the L O R D ; That, they de-  
' ferred the evil day, and caused the Thrones of Op-  
' pression to be exalted : That, they stretched them-  
' selves upon their couches and beds of Ivory, chearing  
' their hearts with variety of Musick, whilst the  
' People of G O D were oppressed, and their sufferings  
' by them unregarded.

' Micaiah, chargeth those who were in Authority  
' with meditating mischiefs upon their beds, at night,  
' and executing it in the morning ; as also with covet-  
' ing and violently taking away other mens Houses  
' and Inheritances, Chap. 2. He charges their Prin-  
' ces and Rulers with ignorance in Judgment, with  
' hating that which is good, with loving that which is  
' evil, with plucking the skins of the People from their  
' flesh, tearing the flesh from the bones, and quite de-  
' vouring them. He accuses their Prophets of leading  
' the People into errors, of being contentious and quar-  
' relsome with such as fed them not according to their  
' unsatiable longings ; of building up Sion with Blood,  
' and Jerusalem with Iniquity. He affirmed, that  
' the Heads of the People judged for reward ; that  
' the Priests taught for hire ; and that their Prophets

C

prophefied

' *prophefied for money, Chap. 3. He impeached the Nation of fraud and lying, of deceitfulnefs in their Trading, and of uſing falſhood in their weights and meaſures, Chap. 6. He complained, that good and righteous men were perifhed out of the Land; that, they lay in wait for Blood, hunting their Brethren as with Nets, and plaid upon both hands in their proſecutions of evil: That, their Princes were greedy of Gifts and Bribes, plotters of miſchief, and the beſt of them but a Bryar or a Thorn. That, Children diſhonoured their Parents; That, Kinfmen were treacherous to each other; That, the moſt dangerous Enemies were men of the ſame houſhold; and, that neither Friends, Guides, Guardians, or they who lay in each others boſoms, were to be truſted, Chap. 7.*

' *The Prophet Zephaniah attested, that their Princes were like roaring Lyons and ravenous Wolves gnawing the very Bones of the People: That, their Prophets were light treacherous perſons; their Priests violaters of the Laws, and polluters of the Sanctuary, Chap. 3.*

' *Haggai upbraids them, with neglect of G O D's Houſe, and ſuffering that to be waſte, whiſt they were curiouſly trimming up their own habitations.*

' *Zechary declares, the hypocriſie of their Faſts, affirming that they were deaf to all good Counſel, and that, becauſe they would not liſten unto G O D, he would not hearken unto them, Chap. 7.*

' *Malachi charges their Priests both with offering polluted Bread, and with making the Table of the L O R D contemptible; which laſt mentioned crime is now almoſt epidemical.*

THEſE *Preſentments* were made and recorded by  
twelve

twelve good and lawful men, and are a *Breviate* but of some of those Transgressions which are enumerated in the books of the *Prophets*, and charged upon the *Jews* by their Mouths and Pens, before and after the *Babylonish Captivity*, even whilest interchanges of *Judgments* and *Mercies* were frequently dispensed to reclaim them, to the manifesting of GOD's wonderful patience and long-suffering during their *Prevarications*. Of his Patience we have had the like experience, as also how unjustly some of his *Messengers* whom he hath sent to reconcile us unto him by Repentance, are traduced and persecuted as seditious persons, troublers of the common Peace, and disaffected to *Civil Governments*. To the sins aforementioned, I might add the manifold Provocations of the Kings, Princes, Priests and People of that Nation, in those dayes wherein they seemed to serve GOD with most uprightness. The *Patriarchs* when they were but one Family, during the life of *Jacob*, failed grossly ; and *Moses* gave a true character of their Posterity in his time, as also what they would afterward prove : So did the Prophet *David* in his Generation, who, though he was a wise King (and probably endeavoured their Reformation as much as in him lay) complained, that *there was no good man left* ; that, *there was no trust to be reposed in Princes* ; and charged them, who were in Authority, with *establishing wickedness by Law* ; particularly inveighing (in *Psal.* 82.) against the corruptions of those *Congregations of the Mighty*, which I conceive were equivalent with our *Parliaments*, *Councils*, and *supream Judicatories*, as being extreamly depraved ; yea, he personates GOD himself, standing where he beholds their proceedings, and sharply reproving them, for

C 2

their

*their unjust accepting of the persons of the wicked ; for negligence in executing Justice on the behalf of the Needy, the Fatherless, and the Widow : For being wilfully ignorant of their duties ; for obstinately walking on in darkness ; and for destroying even the foundations of Righteous Government.* Many other great sins was that *Nation* guilty of, from the day of their deliverance out of *Egypt*, until their settlement in the *Promised Land* ; and likewise from that time, still growing worse (except otherwhile when they were under the Rod ) till they committed the great sin of crucifying the *Messias*, for which they were scattered throughout the world, to be preserved for a universal Memorial both of G O D's *Justice* and *Mercy* to his People in all places and Generations (until their *Restoration* and the fulness of the *Gentiles*) according to *David's* prophetic Imprecation, *Scatter them, but destroy them not, lest my People forget it.* Signal were their Murmurings, frequent Idolatries and Rebellions in the dayes of *Moses*, *Joshua* and the *Judges*. Likewise, notwithstanding GOD's daily miraculous Presence among them in a *Cloud* and a *fiery Pillar*, feeding, protecting and providing for them forty years together, in an extraordinary manner amidst their Enemies and in desolate places, they were sottishly distrustful of him, and desired to return back again to that *Bondage* from which he had delivered them by a strong Arm. And, (as if they had a natural propensity to slavery, and were necessitated to be slaves one way or another) when G O D had performed his Promise, by settling them a *free People* in a good Land; They (being weary of the *Government* by Him established, which was to have been a Preparatory unto *his Government*, to whom alone all the Kingdoms of the

the world belong) craved to be ruled after the mode of such *Heathen Kings* as he had destroyed for their fakes.

Great were their failings and transgressions also, when they had Kings according to their own desire; And such Kings as they were desirous of, occasioned their extirpation out of that good Country which GOD had bestowed on them. In the dayes of *David*, *Solomon*, *Asa*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, *Jehosaphat*, (the best of their Princes) they were guilty of great Provocations, and of much greater during the Reigns of their worst Kings; especially, of wilful and foolish *Jeroboam*, who made *Israel* to sin by his *State-policy* and obstinateness therein; when, notwithstanding GOD's extraordinary advancement of him from the rank of common men, to a *Kingdom* (yea, to be a King over his own People, of whom he had rent ten parts in twelve from the Posterity of his beloved *David*) with a conditional Promise to establish his seed for ever on the same Throne, did neglect the performance of that Condition: And we are thereby taught seriously to consider how difficultly they will be reclaimed, who seek to accomplish their ends by *State-policy*, rather than by conforming to divine Counsels and Commands. For, GOD proved him (as he hath tried others in the like manner in these dayes) by no less than three Miracles in one day; manifesting two of them upon his own person, yet they took no effect. If with the fore-expressed Prevarications, I should consider all the sins of these Nations comparatively, illustrating the *Parallel* as I could, to set forth what resemblance our sins, in this Generation only wherein I live, have unto their transgressions, and how liable we are made unto the same Judgments which were inflicted

inflicted on them ( even to be cast out of our *Country*, and be made Vagabonds throughout the world, as they long since were, & some of us have lately already been ) it would either provoke us to a speedy amendment, or stupifie us with amazement. For, since I first knew the world, men of all degrees, professions and relations, *Princes and Subjects ; Peers and Commons ; Husbands and Wives ; Priests and Lay-men ; Parents and Children ; Tutors and Scholars ; Masters and Servants ; high and low ; rich and poor*, are in my Judgment much more depraved than formerly they were ; And many among us, have so little regarded what GGD hath done *for us*, or *against us* ; so often resisted the *Holy Ghost*, and so hardened our hearts, that all Premonitions being rendred fruitless, it may be feared that some of us will be found, as guilty of the Blood of *Jesus Christ* and of his Prophets, as the *Jews* were : And as by long continuing in their sins, and by proceeding from one sin to another, they at length, by the just Judgment of G O D (*who deservedly makes them quite blind who will not see when they may*) hardned into such impenitency and blindness, that when their promised *King and Messias* came to make them a glorious and a happy *Nation*, they despightfully rejected, slandered, persecuted and crucified him : So, I fear some of us may so parallel them, that at *Christ's* second coming ( which now draws near ) they will be liable to severer Judgments, than have befallen to the *Jews* ; which I heartily beseech G O D to prevent.

But, it is your *Application*, not mine alone, which must make this proposed *Parallele* effectual ; and therefore I entreat you, to take it into serious consideration whilst ye may, before the day of your *Probation* hath  
an



an end ; because you have had them for an example, as also the same fore-warnings which they had, with an Addition of many other timely *Precautions*. Do it speedily, lest that *evil spirit* which G O D sent between the *Shchemites* and their King *Abimelech* (and which hath already possessed many) do by those *Animosities*, which are still fomented between the late *differing Parties*, render these *Nations* incapable of being reconciled to G O D , and to each other for ever. Particularly, I beseech you who are in Authority, to consider, what an illegal depriving peaceable men of their Liberties, may at last occasion. To consider also, whether it be according to the Privileges due to the *Humane Nature* ( and by the Antient Claims and Charters of these Nations, so often confirmed) that upon every slight suggestion, perhaps of an enemy or an envious neighbour, ( For the Case will be altered, if there be a probable jealousy, that the Common Peace is hazarded ; whereof GOD will judge and avenge, if it be feigned, or satisfaction not made to innocent Sufferers ) whether, I say, sober men should be debarred of their Freedom, by close Imprisonment many months and years, without lawful Tryals, or knowing their Crimes or Accusers ; yea, shut up without means of subsistence, save what they have by charity ; not only their Access denied, who of meer compassion are conscientiously inclined to relieve, but their Wives, Children, Servants, and all others to them relating, restrained from speaking with them, concerning those Affairs on whose prosecution and management, their, and other mens Estates, Credits, necessary Livelihoods, and all their outward Comforts may depend : Not so much favoured as with permission to write a Petition for their Relief,

Relief, or left Necessaries to sustain the healths and lives of their own persons or families : much less to pay those large Fees which are then exacted, and the Charges which the prosecution of Petitions to a hearing will require, where the success also is uncertain. Consider, if such *Grievances* be among us, whether it would not be more agreeable to *Justice*, and a less provoking sin, to inflict death immediately upon every suspicion of a crime, than to expose men to sufferings which are worse than death, contrary to Law, and without permitting them to know either the pretended *Causes*, or their *Accusers*. Consider, whether G O D or Men can be well pleased, that their concealed Foes (and perhaps Foes to the State as much as to innocent mens persons) should be empowered to impose Injuries as Laws, and be lawless in their own persons, to the ruining or impoverishing of many thousands depending upon those who suffer in their own persons and estates. This is to turn Honey into Gall, and Physick into Poyson, Laws into Snares, and Priviledges into the worst Bondage. These Oppressions I never heard of among the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, or among *Christians*, until of late : and, if they be found here, and long practised, it will be impossible these *Nations* should be reformed, or their peace be renewed with G O D, or established between each other : For the *Relations* which men of all sorts and degrees (howsoever differing or agreeing in their Designs, Judgments, Interests or Affections) have to and with each other, such Relations in their Estates, Alliances, Credits or Engagements; and they are so linked together by one or more of these respects, throughout these three *Kingdoms*, that the Discontents and Mischiefs occasioned by such Oppressions, will extend  
to

to all at the last, from the highest to the lowest. The disturbing of stingless *Bees* and their *Breed*, will destroy the whole *Hive*; yea, and all the stalls of *Bees* in these Islands, and those likewise who are gathering Wax and Honey in the remote Woods and Wilderesses of the Earth, for our enriching and their own subsistence, will be so affrighted and discouraged by finding themselves and others liable to such Oppressions, and their quiet uncertain, that they will fly to another Climate, lest Hornets, Wasps and Drones be encouraged to despoil them of their Hives, Lives, and Honey.

To help prevent it, take this *Breviate* which I have composed, and thereby compare that which your own consciences will bring to remembrance, wherein our sins have parallel'd or exceeded the wickedness of the *Jews*; and that this *Preparative* may make it the more practical, recommend it at your Meetings (whilst you enjoy them, if you think it useful) to be considered both joyntly and apart, by every single person and Congregation, how much it concerns us universally and particularly, from the least to the greatest among us: And let not the seeming *novelty* of such expressions as I may casually insert (or the despicableness of my present condition) make you condemn them: seeing this is a time of *Probation*, wherein G O D is pleased to exercise your humility by his most despised *Servants*, and by such *dispensations* and *means* as are denied by the wisdom of the world.

The *Theam* which I have undertaken is so copious, and will probably draw me into so many pertinent *collateral Musings*, seeming to some impertinent, that I must apologize now and then for it, lest you think me too immethodical; in regard when the Pen

D

is

is in my hand, to such or such purposes as I first intend, I usually take in by the way all *Meditations* which then occur, seeming necessary either to prevent Prejudicacy, or to illustrate my prime Intention : sometimes also, that which cometh so in, may be as useful as the main Proposition. The Apprehensions I now have of the sad condition and hazards which these *Nations* are in (at this present) so distract my *Muse* also, in some cases, that otherwhile, hardly knowing what may be fittest to be inserted or omitted, I may fall into seeming Extravagancies. And, it is not to be wondred at, if I do : For the most excellent of G O D's Prophets have often (to our understanding) been transported into such *Raptures* ; and in such cases as this, so confusedly expressed themselves, by reiterating the same words and matter ; by flying, as it were, *on* and *off*, to and fro, and *on* and *on again*, in what they intended to declare ; that they intimate more by their dark confused and dis-joynted expressions (to them who look as well after a *spiritual* as a *literal sense*) than they could have done, by those methodical connexions and prosecutions, which would appear most elegant, and more plausible to carnal wisdom, in the Rhetorical modes of our times. For, the *Prophet* taking into consideration at one and the same time, the Peoples extream perverseness, and G O D's abominating of their sins, together with his unspeakable fatherly affection to the persons of his *Elect* among them (for *Davids* and for his Promise sake) they in one verse or chapter of their Prophecies, personate him exceedingly inclined to Wrath or Jealousie, and in the same chapter, or in the next, personate him as prone to Compassion : In one verse threatening their *perpetual rejection* ; immediatly after, comforting and promising

mising to receive them again to his *everlasting favour*; yea, and bitterly menacing those by whom he had chastised them, for adding their Malice to his Corrections; which may seem, being understood according to the nature and common language of men, to imply contradictory passions or irresolution in GOD, with whom there is no shadow of changing; but it the better insinuates into our hearts an apprehension of that fatherly tender-heartedness which GOD hath toward his People; and signifies to my understanding (with reverence to his unchangeableness be it understood by others) that his People did as it were force GOD by their sinfull frowardness to imploy the utmost of his *Wisdom* and *Omnipotency*, to reconcile his *Justice* and *Mercy* on their behalf; and that it is not in the nature of humane words or language to extend unto a full and plain demonstration of those particular *Notions* which his Prophets divinely apprehended in relation to GOD and his People: And if it fared so with them, much less will it be in my power, to put *spiritual* and *supernatural Contemplations* into a meer *natural* or *literal expression*. Discourses of this kind may challenge allowance of more than ordinary liberty, by circumlocutions or digressions; for, like a *Physician* who is to cure a Patient who hath many *complicated diseases*, I am to apply this to a *Body* which hath many contrary *distempers*, and must therefore make it such a *Catholicon*, as may not more increase the rest, by curing *one malady*: and therefore I will endeavour that which my conscience inclines me to, with as much discretion as I can; and the more *distractions* you find in this *Epistle*, the more it will oblige you to a serious consideration of what is in my mode expressed.

D 2

Consider,

Consider, whether ever you saw a *Picture* made by the most cunning *Painter*, so like the man for whom it was limb'd, or that any one thing can more truly resemble another, than the Inhabitants of these *Isles*, do resemble the People of *Judah* and *Jerusalem* in their prevarications ; and consider it so that your sins may lead you to lay the faster hold on G O D's infinit *Mercy*, by abominating the one, and a right esteem of the other : For, G O D hath made as many gracious offers and promises to us, as to them. They, who had so many gross failings, were nevertheless, his *chosen People*, and *Saints* by calling, separated from other *Nations* ; and I do believe, by the fatherly compassion extended unto them from time to time, and by the manifold *conditional promises* and *deliverances* vouchsafed unto them whilst they prevaricated (in their miraculous preservation now they are scattered) that, he hath still mercy for them according to his *Election*, giving them an Interest in the *sure Mercies of David* ; and that in their *open temporal chastisements*, they shall be *secretly purged* through the *hidden seed of Grace* remaining in them ; and received to his favour in the *evening of the world*. In like manner I believe that many among us at this day, who have in the *outward man*, failed very much, to the dishonour of G O D, and of their *Christian Profession*, having externally suffered, to the glorifying of G O D's *Justice*, are and shall be by the same *free-grace* in this life, or at their translation out of this life, be received into favour to the like glorifying of his *Mercy* in *Christ Jesus* ; yea, much more than it could have been done by their *own Righteousness*, G O D having alwayes respect through *Christ's* merits to what they did conscientiously, though it were over-ballanced by much humane

humane corruption and frailty, yet remember still, that notwithstanding the *infinīt Mercy of G O D*, he is to be feared, and the more to be feared and sought unto with a filial fear, for the sake of that *infinīt Mercy*: And, let heed be taken, lest presuming upon his patience beyond our limits, we outgo the Presumption of the *Jews*, or draw very near to such a dangerous Extravagancy.

To that end, consider how G O D hath from time to time, sought to reclaim us by the like interchanges of *Judgments* and *Mercies*; and how he hath tryed and provoked us, as he said he would provoke the *Jews*, by *foolish People* in our esteem; and by making his Premonitions signal unto us, by acting to that purpose, many things appearing to be ridiculous in our Judgments; as for example, by making use of such a *Dispensation* as this, and of such Persons as I am, to be your *Remembrancers*, by an impulse of Conscience, which we think cannot safely be resisted, though we are otherwhile tempted, as *Jeremy* was, to complain to G O D of that hardship whereto he hath exposed us: For, as the Prophets of the *Jewish Nation*, being the *Watchmen* appointed in their Generations, to forewarn them what the success would be, if they neglected their duties, or the People to repent, being by them forewarned: Even so (as I believe) G O D hath now in some degree qualified me and others (as he did heretofore a *Plowman*, a *Herdsmān*, and a *Fruit-gatherer*) to be Premonitors in these our times, of what we have observed to be misdone or neglected, by *men*; and of what G O D hath *done*, *threatned*, and *promised* in his *Word* concerning such Delinquencies as we are guilty of, and such a Repentance as is expected. In consideration whereof, I  
dared

dared not for my part but signifie what I have declared ; left, though others perish in their sins, their blood may be required at my hands, for neglecting that, which I think my self bound in conscience to forewarn them of in my mode ; which is one kind of *Preaching*, though not in ordinary. And though I have not the Reputation of a *Prophet*, yet GOD hath made me instrumental in fore-declaring many things pertinent to the wel-fare of these *Nations*, long before they came to pass : And I am one of those *despised ones*, of whom he is pleased to make use at such times as these, after the *Counsels* and *Fore-warnings* of *Royal Premonitors*, *honourable Prophets*, *Ministers* and *Remembrancers* have been long neglected ; And that which I have written will evidence me at last, to be neither *seditious Libeller*, *Madman*, *Phanatick*, or one discontented with all *Governments* and *Governours*, as I am by some reputed, who will be of another Judgment when they come to their *Wits* : For, though I have not been wholly free from Errors, those things which I write, are not such as I have learned, like Parots taught by men ; or which were attained by reading or hearing onely ; but, such as were infused by GOD's *Word* and *Spirit* ; and such, as he hath witnessed to my heart more certainly, than that which is made known by sense only.

If it were not so, it had been impossible for me to have sustained so many years without discouragement, those Raylings, Revilings, Slanders, Persecutions and Oppressions, wherewithal I have been exercised by them, who (as it befel to the *Prophets*, *Apostles*, and their true *Successors*) deemed my *Cautions* & *Remembrances* to be seditious and scandalous to Authority, and falsely imputed unto me (as is aforesaid) discontentment



tentment under all *Governments*; whereas I have been actively or passively obedient to every *Government* whereunto G O D hath subjected me, and re-  
 proved in general terms only (in a sober peaceable way) that Oppression and Unrighteousness, which hath been and will be destructive to all *Governments* and *Governours* who continue them. I *neither was*, nor *am*, nor *shall be* disobedient to the just commands of any *Governours* or *Government* which these *Nations* desire, and GOD permits, (*though in his wrath*) but conscientiously, as I now do, submitted at all times to the *Power in Being*, and visibly enabled to protect me, as I ever thought it my duty, whether they favoured or dis-favoured me; neither endeavouring to *set up* or *pull down* any, howsoever they acquired or exercised their Authority: But remembered them sometimes of their duties, as aforesaid, whom I evidently saw to be forgetful thereof; doing it also, without factiousness, and with such Cautions as befitted me in my *station*. I am neither melancholy, nor fullen, nor delighted with contradictions: For, though I have been *a man of strife* (as *Jeremy* said G O D had made him to be) I am not naturally constituted for such a work. My Conversation hath been delightful to many; my Body is as sensible of sufferings as any mans; my natural Affections are strong in me; my Infirmities being great and many, render me as unable by my own strength, to sustain the Desertions, close Imprisonments and Deprivations whereto I am and have been exposed, almost from the cradle; and whereby the world seeks to fright me from prosecuting that, whereto my Conscience inclines me. I likewise confess my self to be naturally as willing as any of you, to take my ease and pleasure in those desirable

irable things of this life, which other men affect; and might probably have enjoyed them, if I had neglected what I have done, and that way imployed the little wit I have, or would desist from such prosecutions for the future.

But, it must not be so: I have lost those Advantages, that I might not lose my self, or you want a *Remembrancer*; and am better contented in their loss, than ever I was in their fruition. I would not fight against the *Philistines* in *Saul's* Armour; nor would my Corruption have permitted me to do my work, if I had not been so long disciplined by *sufferings*, and at last been stript out of all that I had (or might hope for in this world) as now I am; Neither could I have had so much experience of GOD's Mercy as now I have, in being extraordinarily (I might say miraculously) provided for, supported, and supplied, with necessaries for Soul and Body: Nor could I have apprehended experimentally such Comforts in this life, as are discovered unto me *in* and *by* my *restraint* and *Poverty*: Nor should I have believed, that GOD had so great a Number of People in this crooked generation, as I do now know he hath: which Discovery alone, is more joyous unto me, than all my losses and sufferings are grievous. Therefore, if you believe me not herein, let not that which I seem to suffer in your opinion, be altogether useless unto you, for whose advantage, and for whose sakes I have partly suffered them: Nor let these *Preoccupations*, or those which I shall further add, be thought impertinent, considering what trivial Blocks many men stumble at, if they be not removed; especially when men, befottered with sin, and blinded with self-conceit, are drawn into a causeless Prejudice; such as these

Digressions

Digressions from my Text may somewhat perhaps prevent, and hint somewhat also, by the way, usefull to other ends. But, when I have done, and said and written all that I can, it will not wholly prevent misconstructions ; for G O D's *Word* hath not escaped them. Howsoever I cram in so many *Preoccupations*, because they may be (as I inferred before) advantageous to some others in the like cases, and hint somewhat, collaterally pertinent to my *chief Design*, though in other respects, they may be of no avail to me.

There be *Weeds*, which will permit no good Seed to thrive in that ground where they grow, untill they be destroyed by often plowing ; or, until the earth be prepared by a Crop of somewhat destructive to them. *Malice* and *Envy* are of the nature of such Weeds ; and such Herbs of Grace, as *Rhue*, or *Repentance*, which implies *Rue thy Sin*, will never take root, until they be extirpated and the heart prepared by *Love*. Therefore, let us lay aside that *Malice* and *Vengeance*, which lies yet at the heart-root of many of the late *Dissenting Parties* in these *Nations*, notwithstanding the late *Act of Oblivion* ; and consider *in what times we are*, and to what *Period* we draw near, by being guilty of the same sins (or of such as are equivalent to those) which in all Ages have been *Symptoms* and *Harbengers* of *Destructive Changes* : and which do, as it were, compel G O D to withdraw temporary Mercies from his own *Chosen People*, and to inflict severe Chastisements in their stead. Heed well whether we justify not them by our *evil deeds*, whose actions we have condemned in *words*, by our perpetrating the very same wickedness, which we exclaimed against in them, whom G O D dispoiled of their abused Power ; and whether the

E

same

same Paths lead not to the same Destructions? Observe, whether our neglect of *common Justice*, of GOD's *Judgments* and *Mercies*, our Ingratitude, our Murmurings, our Rebellions against him, our Hypocrisies, Apostacies, Idolatries, Superstitions, Profaneness, Oppressions, Spiritual and Corporeal Fornications and Whoredoms, have not been as great, as many, and as impudent as among the *Jews*? Whether our Thankgivings, Praising, Fastings, Feasting, Humiliations, and our other Formalities in Religious and Moral Duties, have not been as worthy to be rejected? Whether our Boastings of our *Civil Justice*, of our *Just Laws*, of the Glory and Purity of our *National Church*, be not much like their vain brags of their Laws, of the *Temple of the L O R D*, and somewhat like the vauntings of luke-warm *Laodicea*? Whether it be not an Abomination resembling (if not equivalent) to the *Jews* impious and cruel sacrificing their Children to *Molech*, when we dedicate our Children, under colour of a pretended zeal of offering them to G O D in professing *Chastity* (after the manner of *Heathen Vestal Nuns*) when we cause them to pass compulsively through the *Fires* of their *Natural Affections*, to the hazard of their Souls and Bodies, in a suffering which G O D requires not at their hands: For, though *Chastity* is a Moral Virtue, *inforced Virginity* is none, but a sinful Inforcement in Parents, especially, when, under a pretended Piety, it is intended only to save a Child's Portion (or the best part thereof) to be consumed upon their own Lusts, or else to advance another Child in their dedication thereof to the world? Consider also, whether we have not parallel'd the Jews as well in *Civil* as in *Religious* misactings, and in some things outgone them?

Whether

Whether our Alliances and Confederacies with professed Enemies of G O D and his *Truth*, have not been contracted more for other sinister respects, than to preserve *Peace* and *humane society*? and whether our trust unto, and in them, and in our own *strength* and *policy*, be not as evident in us, as it was in them, and as repugnant to what G O D approveth? Whether we establish not Wickedness and Oppression by Laws, as they did, or more barbarously than they; as by making some pay for that, whereof not they, but others have the benefit; or, by making the formality of *Legal Proceedings* and *Tryals*, so chargeable, that the *Remedies* of *Grievances* do often prove worse than the *Diseases*; especially to poor men who have most need of Relief; the prosecutions of whose Petitions and Suits for Justice or Equity, being so tedious, difficult and expensive, that the little remainder of their Estates which the Oppressors had left, is quite consumed by those *Courts* and *Officers*, which were constituted for a Remedy; as if they had been purposely ordained to enrich and maintain Oppressors in idleness, who do little or nothing for their large Fees. Thus, to the loss of mens Estates, the loss of labour and precious time is added (with vexation of spirit) to the undoing of many Families: Thus the *Caterpillars* and *Locusts* devour that which the *Storms* had left: The oppressed man periseth without compassion, and would grow desperate, if access to G O D in such straits were not cheap and easie. For what can they possibly do, who deprived of all outward means of livelihood, are also shut up in Prisons, contrary to Law and Equity, both from the comfort of Relations, and from endeavouring either for their liberty or subsistence?

E 2

Consider,

Consider, whether even they also upon whom such afflictions are come, and have no refuge but in G O D, do not still neglect him, and seek rather to be delivered by the World which oppressed them, than by being reconciled unto G O D, from whom cometh Salvation; and whether there be not many among us (even of those in every differing Judgment, relating to Piety, Policy and Humanity) who wickedly devise false *Rumours, Visions, Apparitions, Signs, Wonders and Revelations*, to delude and amaze the People, or to discredit those Reports which are true? and whether there be not some seduced rather by a *feminine*, than guided by a true *masculine spirit*, who, like the Women *Propheteesses* among the *Jews*, put pillows under mens arms, to uphold them in their Errours by their *Gipsie-like Predictions*? Some also, who, not only as the *Jews* did, hunt after vain *Astrological Predictions*, which they call *Prophecies*, & such Sorcerous Prefages as *mother Shiptons*, but who have dependance also upon them, and seek for ease in their troubles, and for cure of their fears and distempers, as *Saul* did from the Witch of *Endor*; and who, as others did heretofore, send to enquire of false Gods, neglecting and contemning such Remedies and Prefages of good or evil, as are grounded upon the infallible Word of G O D; as if they conceived that would be to them, what *Micah* was to *Ahab*; and that they could expect no good Prefages to them from G O D's true Prophets, or by ought grounded upon his Word. I perceive too evidently that it is so; and that this wicked Vanity is fomented by the frequent publication of *lying Pamphlets*, purposely invented to disparage *Truths*. Therefore, beware of them, and try all *spirits* before you trust them (even mine as well as the rest)

rest) that ye may know what to adhere unto safely; and, neither be deluded by Impostors, nor deprived of the benefits which you may receive by wholesome Cautions: For, as we are in that time in which the *Elect* will be in hazard of being deceived; and though it is true, that, *they who are not against us, are with us*; So, it is also true, that, *many who seem to be with us, are against us*, and by that means get opportunities, to draw us into wicked, or at least into uncomely and unsafe practices.

Consider these things, you who forget both *Piety* and *Humanity*, and whether our Kings, our Princes, our Nobles, our Commons, our Gentry, our Judges, our Priests, our Magistrates, our Councils, our Courts or Trustees, our Fathers, our Children, our Women, our Servants, yea, all of us in general and in particular, have not prevaricated as the *Israelites* did heretofore when they were most corrupt? whether we have not set *our Thresholds* by *GOD's Thresholds*, and our Posts by his Posts? whether our Blood-guiltiness, our Thieving, our Drunkenness, our Curfings, our Swearings and Forfwearings, Suborning of Witnesses, and the Perjury of *Jurors*, have not made our Land to mourn because of *Oaths*, as much as their Land did? Whether we have not been as guilty by immoderate coveting to lay House to House, and Land to Land, to the occasioning of depopulation? by lying and falshood in our trading with each other; by unequal weights and measures; and some by vainly scattering and squandering away the Estates and Inheritances left them by their Predecessors? Whether we are not as culpable by *Covenant-breaking*, Briberies, Extortions, grinding the faces of the Poor; by selling them for trifles; by prosecuting our cruel Intentions

tentions, until Blood toucheth Blood ; by seeking to cover one sin with another ; by justifying the Wicked, and condemning the Innocent, untill our Injustice cries as loud against us for Vengeance as it did against them ? Whether some of our *Nobles* (as we call them) have not been Companions of Murderers and Thieves, with Indemnity ? Whether we are not as guilty of persecuting, oppressing, and murdering the Prophets and Servants of G O D, by shutting them up in Dungeons and Prisons, till famished through want of Relief, under false pretences of Sedition, Scandals, or of being troublemakers of the Common Peace ; as *Jeremy* had been, if one Conscientious *Blackamoore* had not been more pitiful than all the rest of the People in *Jerusalem* ? Whether we have not set up such Governours and Princes, as G O D never intended to set over us, until we our selves would so have it, in imitation of our Pattern the *Jews* ? Whether our Women be not grown as malapert in justifying their Superstitions, as the *Jewish Women* were in the dayes of *Jeremy* ? and whether their feminine extravagancies in new-fangled baubles, fantastick habits, dressings, gestures and postures, may not be a symptom of our approaching Desolation, as it was a Preludium to their *Captivity* and *Rejection* ? Whether also, our superstitious Devotion hath not fed and countenanced as many *false Prophets* as *Jezebel* did, suppressing, oppressing and silencing the *true Prophets* and *Ministers* of G O D and his *Truth* ; making them also to be objects of scorn and ridiculous laughter in the publick Theaters ? And, whether we have not often pretended both a Reformation of our Manners, for our personal advantages only, and a voluntary desire to be counselled and directed as the *Jews* did, when they intended



intended to depart from their Country into *Egypt*, yet, procured our secret purposes, as if done in despite of GOD? yea, and whether, as the *Judges* of the *Jews*, judged for reward, their *Priests* taught for money, and their *Prophets* prophesied for hire, we have not those Judges, Lawyers, and Divines, who will make both Law and Divinity to speak any thing for their advantage, who may either prefer them or deprive them of their Preferments?

Consider all these Particulars, and such other as your own Consciences will bring to mind as considerable; especially what *Covenants* we have broken, and in what manner; and therewith take notice and remember, that I do but offer it to your consideration, whether you are guilty of these sins in particular or not, leaving the Verity thereof to your own search; and the Conclusion and Application to your own Consciences; in regard if they be silent, it would be to no purpose for me to charge them upon you, though I could evidently prove them.

I confess, I am very jealous we may be found guilty of all the aforementioned Crimes; of some of them, I know we are culpable, and of many also, unknown to the *Jews*, which these latter times have produced. Even in constraining men to act and profess in relation to *Religion*, against their *Consciences*, (if it be according to the Cryes I hear) more cruel in that respect than the worst of their Idolatrous Kings. For, though they allured men to their Idolatries and Superstitions, I do not remember that any one of them compelled the worshipping of Idols; no, not *Jeroboam* (who notwithstanding GOD's giving him a Kingdom, with many gracious promises to establish it, was more wickedly politick than any other, to continue

tinue the same to his posterity in his own mode ) For,  
 I do not hear that he forcibly restrained any from go-  
 ing up to worship G O D at *Jerusalem*, or perse-  
 cuted any for not worshipping his *Golden Calves* ; but  
 permitted every man that would, to build *high Places*,  
 to plant Groves, and to worship either the L O R D  
 G O D, or Idols, at home, as he pleased : Neither do  
 I read that any of their best Kings or Governours  
 made or executed any penal Laws touching the Con-  
 science, except only after the return from *Babylon*, in  
 an extraordinary Case, and in relation to the obser-  
 ving of those antient Laws of their *Nation*, by the  
 breach of which their Civil Peace could not well be  
 without hazard ; at which time there was a penalty  
 threatned by Proclamation, and afterwards a Cove-  
 nant voluntarily and conscientiously made, or was at  
 least pretended by Prince, Priests and People, for  
 the breach whereof, Confiscation of Goods and Ex-  
 clusion from the Congregation was menaced ; but  
 how far forth it was put in execution it appears not ;  
 no had any wrong been done thereby, because that is  
 no wrong which is done to a man by his own consent ;  
 no, nor that which is done against his will, if it be  
 purposed for his *wel-being*, and cannot have any ef-  
 fect to his hurt, nor fail of that good which is pre-  
 tended ; which enforcing the Conscience can never  
 produce, but the contrary rather : for GOD is never  
 wel-pleased with any service unwillingly done, though  
 the performance be good in it self ; and is always  
 highly displeased with every one, who for fear, favour,  
 or for any other end whatsoever, acteth or speaketh  
 against his Conscience ; and no doubt as highly of-  
 fended with all those who offer violence to the Con-  
 sciences of other men, in regard it is not only inju-  
 rious

rious to men, but a presumptuous offence also against a Prerogative due and proper to Him alone.

If these Prevarications be found among us, be it known that they are surer tokens of G O D's Indignation, than those which we call *Plague-tokens* are of their near approaching deaths who are visited with the *Pestilence*: yet we have lately had other *signs* and *tokens*, which are both *Prefignificators* of the *General Judgment*, and of the National Calamities which will come upon particular Nations and Persons, when their sins grow ripe; according to what our Saviour *Christ* foretold, *Luke 21. 25.* where it is said, *There shall be signs in the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, and upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring; mens hearts failing in looking after those things which are coming upon the Earth: for the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken, &c.* We have seen these or such like signs, whether taken in a *metaphorical* or a *literal sense*, and the sign also of the *Prophet Jonas* mystically revived, in some of the Saints of G O D, whose Judgments are begun upon those of his own Household; and his *Justice* and *Mercy* have been manifested upon many of them in our sight. Moreover, though we who believe his *Word* have therein sufficient manifestations, and look for no other signs of what is approaching; yet, G O D hath vouchsafed to *Unbelievers* in these days, what he denied to the like unbelieving and adulterous Generation heretofore, if what hath been credibly reported may be credited: For, we have heard of more strange Prodigies, dreadful Apparitions, and unusual Visions in the Air, upon the Waters, and on the Earth, within a few years, than I have read recorded in all humane Stories since the coming of

F *Christ*

*Christ* in the flesh ; and, they are the more to be considered, in regard GOD hath been pleased to give us Signs of what he intends, though (as I said before) he denied Signs to those who desired them : and forasmuch as they made us not a whit the better, it implies an experimental verifying of this saying ; *They who will will not believe Moses and the Prophets, will not believe one sent from the dead.* If the *Signs* and *Wonders* lately averred be true, or but in part true (as I am persuaded they are, though I never saw any such) then they are very considerable : And no less considerable or significant are they, if feigned or delusions ; seeing they declare this Generation to be presumptuously wicked beyond all before them, as daring to make, aver, and publish Lies of that nature. If they are true, they are the *Finger of GOD*, pointing to somewhat whereof they are Signs, and which ought to be heeded : yea, though they are but *delusions of the Fancy*, they are terrible Signs of affrighted and self-condemning Consciences. Those *Apparitions* which we see, or fear to see upon the *Earth*, shew us from whence all our troubles come, even from our *Earthly-mindedness* : and the Signs which men see, or think they see in the *Heavens*, invite us to look up *unto those Hills, from whence cometh our Salvation.*

We have yet other Signs of what is approaching, and of what will certainly ensue, if not prevented by Repentance ; and they are very significant and observable, though very few heed them, or think themselves therein concerned. GOD foretold the obstinate *Jews*, that he would provoke them by such as they reputed a *foolish People* ; and so have we been provoked by some among us, whose persons, words and actions appear unto the greatest number of us, not only

only foolish and contemptible, but impudent and wicked also. Such were they and their *Actings*, who came naked into our *Publick Assemblies* ; and by what spirit soever they were thereto moved, were *Signs*, which I believe G O D permitted, to signify, that he will openly discover our *Shame*, and strip us naked from all those *Fig-leaves* which we have patched together to hide it ; and take from us all those things which we have made our chief delight, pride, and ornament. And I am perswaded those *fig-nal Actings* of that nature, which were personated by some of the *Prophets*, were in their times reputed as ridiculous and scandalous, as the extravagancies which have been seen in our dayes. They likewise, whom ye term *Quakers*, and who with much resolution and patience, do sustain the Persecutions whereby they are prosecuted in all places ; Even they, as I believe, are instrumental by a *Divine Dispensation*, signally to foreshew that Contempt which G O D will bring upon our *false Worship, false Honour, vain Complements, Hypocrisies, Superstitions, Formalities in Piety, counterfeit Morality, and Dissimulations* with G O D and *Men*. Many take great offence at them ; and I do believe (because it hath been averred unto me by conscientious men) that some, so called, have professed and taught erroneous and scandalous Doctrines ; for, there is no Dispensation whereinto the *Devil* hath not screwed many of his Instruments, to disparage and hinder what was thereby intended ; but I do profess, that none among all them, of whose Principles and Conversation I have had opportunity to take notice, hath appeared otherwise to me than a truly honest and pious man ; and though their *language* and *manners* are offensive to many, they are not so to me ; be-

cause, if they be not taken up with an affectation to singularity, whereof I cannot judge, unless I could see their hearts, they seem to me such as are essential to their *Dispensation*; and had G O D fitted me for the same work, I should have done as some of them do, though I will not justify all that some of them do. *Habakkuk* in his mode, and at such a time as this, was a *Quaker*: So likewise was *Ezekiel* the Prophet, and a sign to the *Jews*, by G O D's Dispensation in his time; as appears, *Ezek. 12. 17. The Word of the L O R D came unto me, saying, Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and carefulness, and say unto the People of the Land, thus saith the LORD G O D, of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the Land of Israel, They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that their Land may be desolate of all that is therein, because of the violence of them who dwell in it.* Let this be well considered, and whether our *Quakers* may not be a sign of the like Judgement upon our chief City, and all these three Nations; yea, and to all those Nations whither they have been dispersed, if they speedily repent not; for, their *Actings* and *Sufferings* are not in vain.

I have observed one occasion of hardning the hearts of many in this *Generation*, which was not ripened until these latter Ages of the world; and though little notice be taken thereof, it makes many defer their *Repentance*, and hardens the greatest number into a resolute perseverance in their wicked courses, by a mis-apprehending of G O D's *Wayes*, a mis-belief of his *Word*, ignorant of his *Justice*, and a false Conclusion drawn from an antient and true *Prophecy*,  
by

by reason of the long continuance and prevalency of Sin, Oppression and Tyranny in those courses and Postures wherein they have been acted. Men have *walked so far after the Counsels of the Ungodly, and stood so long in the way of Sinners*, that they are now *seated in the Chair of the Scornful*, and make a mock at Reproofs and Instructions, according to this Prophecy of the Apostle *Peter* : *In the latter dayes there shall be* (said he) *Scoffers, walking after their own Lusts, and saying, Where is the Promise of his coming? for, since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation;* 2 *Pet.* 3. 4. Into these latter dayes we are fallen, and by not heeding, not believing, or by not rightly understanding the ground of this Prophecy touching the revealed things of G O D, the *Scorners of good Counsel* have now fulfilled that *Prophecy*, to their own disadvantage : For, to put the fear of GOD's Judgments out of their own and other mens hearts, they scoffingly and prophanely conclude, from the long continuance and prevalency, as aforesaid, that Sin and Oppression have had in the world, from the Creation until this day, that so it will be until the end of time; and deride those who expect the coming of *Christ* the King of Righteousness. *Tush* (say they) *thus it ever was, and thus it will be for ever.* G O D either heeds it not, or regards it not; and the *Caveats, Counsels, Threatnings, Promises, and Premonitions* of those who pretend to be *Ministers and Messengers from G O D*, are but *politick Devices of their own brain, forged out of Envy and Malice, to disturb us in our Pleasures, diminish our Profit, and weaken our Power*; for after above sixteen hundred years preaching of their *Imaginary Kingdom to come*, we see as little, or less likelihood

*hood thereof, than was at the birth of that King whom they expect.* To this effect are their *Scoffs*, and thereby they encourage each other in their Wickedness and Oppressions. But they, and all whom they shall delude, will find themselves to have been much deceived. Therefore, in hope it may awaken some out of their dreams before it be too late, I will declare unto you a *Mystery*, by few yet heeded, which GOD hath revealed unto me in this my *Confinement*, to strengthen my Faith, when it was exercised and tried by that and such like Atheistical Arguments and Objections of carnal men, who presume on the perpetuity of their Kingdom: and I will illustrate as plainly as I can, that which I have apprehended, by looking back as far as the *Creation*.

All things that GOD created, were exceeding good, even *Mankind*, which is now depraved, was made good and innocent, though of a constitution possibly *mutable*: That possible *mutability* GOD proved by an easie Law given in *Paradise*, without compulsatively necessitating, or byassing our first Parents, to the right-hand or to the left, but evenly ballancing them with a *Free-will*; yea, and without debarring them, until their Delinquency, from the Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden, or from any other means whereby they might have been preserved and confirmed in their Integrity (so far forth as was pertinent to a Creature left free and under no restraint.) In this happy estate they continued, until the *Devil* (who had corrupted himself without a Tempter) being moved thereto through envy, seduced our said first Parents through subtilty: For, he perceiving them to rest satisfied with the knowledge of *Good only*, without desiring cognizance of *Evil*; first, by *lying*, prepossessed them



them with an injurious misbelief of GOD, and then with a false and vain opinion, that they should become like G O D , by knowing both *Good and Evil*, if they did eat of the Tree by Him forbidden. That *Suggestion* being entertained, begat in them a desire of an unprofitable knowledge ; and that *Desire* being conceived, corrupted into an *actual disobedience* of GOD's Command ; whereupon they quickly found themselves to be guilty, naked and miserable. Their former free liberty of access to the Tree of Life was obstructed, as also the influence of many Graces formerly vouchsafed, and they were turned out of *Eden* into the World, to get their living by the sweat of their brows, in painful tilling the accursed Earth, liable both to a corporeal and spiritual death : And, since it was their own choice and desire to know both *Good and Evil*, G O D determined they should experimentally know them, and that Privilege be derived to all the Posterity of *Adam*, to satisfy their curiosity, and make them really and thoroughly sensible thereby of their neglecting his *Goodness*, of the Devil's malice, whom they believed, and of their own unfaithfulness, ingratitude and folly, untill the time were accomplished, wherein the *Seed of the Woman* should break the *Serpent's head*. *Divine Justice* did so decree also, that after their exclusion out of *Eden* for disobedience, there should be Enmity between the *Seed of the Woman* and of the *Serpent* for ever ; and a certain space of time allowed, wherein both *righteous* and *wicked men*, should have an *actual* as well as a *contemplative* experience of *Good and Evil*, by permitting *Men*, *Good* and *evil Angels*, to make trial what their own *power*, *wisdom*, *folly*, *righteousness* or *wickedness* could produce, whilst G O D stood as it were

were indifferently looking on as a *Superintendent*, to prevent (as occasions would be offered) what might else by their misactings, be destructive to the whole *humane Nature*, to the residue of his *Creatures*, or to his *Eternal Decrees*. Ignorance of this *Mystery*, and not being acquainted with the concurrant *Justice* and *Mercy* of GOD, revealed in his *Word*, inclines depraved Men to think and say, *all things continue as they were since the Creation*; and that, so they shall continue for ever: which evidently appears to my understanding to be otherwise determined; and how that long toleration of Wickedness from which they extract their false Conclusion, shall ripen it unto the destruction of it self. But, because this *Mystery* hath been long veiled, and is yet beclouded, I will express the same as it hath appeared to me in this my *Loneliness*, that it may help strengthen the Faith and Hope of those who can receive it, as it hath fortified mine, to the making a large amends for all my Sufferings. The better to explain it, I must walk a little about by the way of *Circumlocution*, that I may fetch in some *collateral Notions*, which will be pertinent to my main *Design*. Slight them not, my dear Brethren, though in some Circumstances I may differ from you in Judgement: for, if we continue in the *Love of Christ Jesus*, and of each other, that *Love* will at last bring us into all Truth, make all, who are of *one house*, to be of *one mind*, and cover a multitude of other sins, as well as our *Ignorances*, which are not wilfully contracted.

*I proceed with my promised Illustration.* GOD Almighty (all whose Actions are *eternal*) when he was pleased to give a *being* unto *Time*, and make a *visible World*, seemed in some respects, to work according

cording to the manner of men, the better to fuit his workings, to the natures and capacities of his Creatures; as by making his Actings to be *temporary*, and that which he could have perfected in one *moment*, to be the work of *six Ordinary Dayes*. In which time, he having compleated all Created things, and put them into an orderly way of procreating and continuing themselves by his *assisting Providence*, and *Superintendency*, it is said he rested the *Seventh day*, and Sanctified it. Not, that he needed *Rest*, or the setting apart of any portion of *Time* for himself, who is L O R D of *Eternity*, but in respect only to *man-kind*, and to what should come to pass about the latter end of *Time*. The Consideration of that *Rest*, and *Sanctification*, dictated unto me that which I have discovered of the foresaid *Mystery*; in the Illustration whereof I shall hint upon some particular *Notions*, repugnant to what hath been commonly believed by many good men concerning the *Sabbath*; wherein I hope to be as charitably censured, as I censure those, who sincerely declare their Judgements, though they are not the same with mine. I am not of their Opinion, who suppose the fore-mentioned Sanctification of a part of *Time*, did imply that *Seventh day*, which was afterward Commanded to be observed by the *Jews* when they were brought out of *Egypt*: For, it is said by *Moses*, Deut. 5. 15. that the *Sabbath* at that time enjoyned to be observed, was Instituted for a Remembrance of that *Deliverance*, as likewise to preserve them alwaies mindful to be merciful to *Servants*, *Cattel*, and *Strangers*, as GOD was to them, in vouchsafing *Rest* and *Deliverance* from their hard labour, and cruel *Taskmasters*, in the Land wherein they had been *Strangers* and *Servants*:

G

And

And (*the Sabbath being made for man, and not man for the Sabbath*) it was chiefly for that end Commanded. Nor do I think the Sanctifying of the *Seventh day of the Creation* (or that which was enjoined to the *Jews*) implied to the Sanctification of that which is called the LORD's *Day*, which is observed by most *Christians*, according to an ancient custome for a day of Assembling together in regard upon that day of the week, our Saviour *Jesus Christ* (with whom the *Jewish Sabbath* was buried) arose from Death to Life upon that day of the week. Yet I my self do observe that day, and acknowledge the observation thereof (if not *Judaically* or *Superstitiously* kept and imposed) to be a pious *Custom* and *Institution*, as well tending to our edification in *Faith* and *good life*, by our meeting to hear GOD's *Word* and communicate in other Pious Duties, as towards a fulfilling that part of the *Moral Law*, which is contained in the *Ten Commandments*, and enjoyneth as allowance of competent *Rest*, and corporeal refreshment to *Servants, Cattel* and *Strangers* who would else be oppressed by unmerciful *Masters* and *Owners*, who either know not how to use their *Christian Liberty*, or are ignorant what is due to the Creatures by the *Law of Nature*; and for that reason, provision hath been prudently made by the practise of the Church, and by *Christian Princes* upon penalties for allowing of cerain portion of time, and they are not wilfully to be neglected, nor superstitiously to be observed; but, for conveniency, comlinefs and order sake, that we may associate in the Service of GOD, and communicate in holy Duties, at such times, to the edifying of each other: yet over and above those times, G O D provided a *Supplement* for Moral Rest,

and

and spiritual Contemplations, by allowing to every *Day*, a *Night* wherein to rest the body by sleep, and to refresh the mind by Prayer and Meditations. But, I do not find that the LORD's *Day* was enjoined by any *Evangelical Precept* to be observed instead of the *Jewish Sabbath*, and in such manner as that was : Or that the said *Jewish Sabbath* was given at the *Creation*, or at any time since by *divine Institution*, to be an Universal Law to all *Mankind*, or to any of another *Nation*, save only to those who became *Jewish Profelytes* whilst the *Ceremonial Law* was in force. For, had it been otherwise, then that *seventh day* should questionless, have been universally made known, and kept without scruple by other Nations, without changing it into another day, until it had been divinely done by the same *Law-giver*, and that change declared by the promulgation of his *new Covenant* in the *Gospel*, it being not in the power of any other to change his *Ordinances*, or to warrant a variation from them in the least *Punctilio*, whether they concern *Faith* or *Manners*. The observation of *Dayes* and *Meats*, with such-like Ceremonies, had their end in *Christ*; and every man is left at liberty, as concerning a *Religious Observation* of such things, to do as the present necessity requires, and as he thinks himself in his own Conscience obliged : And therefore the *Apostle* implicitly reproving them who presumed to judge between another mans Conscience and GOD (to whom only he stands or falls as his Servant) expecteth every one to do as he is perswaded in his Conscience ; and saith, *Rom. 14. He that observeth a day, observeth it unto the LORD, and he who observeth it not, forbears the observation thereof in conscientious obedience to the LORD also :*

G 2

which

which liberty he would not have given, had a *set day* been essential to the morality of the fourth Commandment. Therefore I am not offended with any one, what day soever he observeth or observeth not, who doth it Conscientiously, not Contentiously; neither *condemning himself in that which he alloweth or disalloweth*, nor judging uncharitably of others who claim the like liberty of Conscience. And I hope the conscientious sanctification of Dayes piously set apart for Religious Duties, will be rather better, then less observed, by what I have hitherto, or shall hereafter express; for there be many, to my knowledge, who are more zealous in professing the observation of this or that day, then in truly observing any day as they ought to do; as also of many other Christian Duties; and such Persons will take most offence at what I have expressed.

It is also to be Considered, that the Ceremonial observation of a *seventh part of time* for the competent rest of mens bodies, and providing due nourishments and refreshments for the Soul (as also for performance of Holy Duties) neither *is*, nor *was*, or can be essential to the *morality of Rest*, or of *Religious Duties*, but Circumstantial and Ceremonial only; in regard a due portion of time, or any set time for these purposes, cannot be just the same portion, or a like expedient for all, but must be more or less, oftener or seldomer, according to the differing strengths, weaknesses, ignorances, or other defects, necessities, or occasions of Individual persons, who shall need the same; and who must take and be allowed such times, and so much time, as shall be necessary, and is required by that morality, which was written in the hearts of all men, among the residue of universal  
Morals

Morals at the beginning of time. And the *Rest* of that *Mystical Sabbath*, which GOD is said to have sanctified as aforefaid, is neither pertinent nor communicable to *Beasts*, or meer *natural Men*; or to any, save to those *Saints* who are made one with GOD in *Christ Jesus*; and, who have wrought, and are to work with GOD and Him, in the *six dayes of a thousand years a piece* upon the *work of Regeneration*; and in maintaining *Good* against *Evil*, until it shall obtain the *Conquest*. These things considered, the sanctifying of a more excellent *Sabbath*, than that which was observed by the *Jews*, or than that which is called the LORD's *day*, seemeth to have been intended by that which GOD is said to have sanctified at the *Creation*; and the *Mystery* which I would shew forth, relating to a confutation of the Error occasioned by the long continuance of Wickedness and Tyranny in the World (and which was in part discovered unto me, by meditating the foregoing Circumstances) is this;

GOD, having finished his Work of *Creation* the sixth day, (wherein *Man* was also made, for whose sake the World was made) His Wisdom fore-seeing what the *Devil's malice*, and *humane curiosity* would produce, by desiring the knowledge of *Good and Evil*; it was his good pleasure (all his Operations as to things *Temporary*, being in *Number*, *Weight*, and *Measure*, and *a thousand years with him but as one day, and one day as a thousand years*) that, as he had wrought *six common dayes* upon the *work of Creation*, so his *Intellectual and Reasonable Creatures*, having made themselves work by their *Prevarications*, should have *six mystical dayes of a thousand years a piece*, according to the vulgar Accompt, wherein to do those  
works

works which they ought to do, or had a desire to do, that so they might have a sufficient time wherein to compleat their *knowledge of Good and Evil*, according to their longing, as aforefaid : And the *seventh day* which GOD sanctified after the work of Creation, is, as I believe, that *mystical day of a thousand years* ; or that seventh part of time, ( be it sooner or later ) wherein *Christ*, according to their expectation in the main, whom you call *Fift-Monarchy-men*, shall visibly Reign upon the Earth with his Saints, as *John* hath Prophefied, *Revel. 20. 5.* At which time will begin that great and Everlafting *Sabbath*, wherein they shall reft from their labours, and wherein they, who have feen *Christ* upon the Earth in his *Humiliation*, shall there alfo behold him in his *Glorification*, to the rejoycing of his *chofen People*, and to the confufion of his *Adverfaries* ; not in fuch a grofs, carnal manner, as is fancied by fome, but as becomes glorified Bodies ; and as was partly typified, by our *Saviours Transfiguration* upon the Mount, when his Difciples then prefent, well knew not what they either faw or faid ; or, as it was at the hour of his *Ascention*, which is neither expreffible or intelligible, in the ftate wherein we now are.

During the first *fix thousand years* of time, *Good and Evil* are permitted to execute their diftinct and mixt Powers and Faculties, in working out their ends, and in ftruggling for the mastery, and manifeftation of their *Natures*, as they beft can, in and by all thofe who are to them refpectively inclinable : And, when that *fix thousand years* are compleated ( abating fo much thereof only, as the violent fury of the *Devil*, *Antichrift*, and their Confederates, fhall diminish of their own time, within the laft *fix thousand years* )



years) then the *Wickedness* of the wicked, the *Righteous endeavours* of good men (so far forth as it is meerly their own) and all that seems *good or evil* in their own *strength, weakness, wisdom, folly, ungodliness* or *piety*, shall come to an end, and be of no force or esteem : Whereof, the *Devil* began to be afraid, when he said to *Christ*, *Art thou come to torment us before the time ?* That, seems to me, the *seventh day* which *G O D* is said to have *sanctified*, and to rest on after his *six dayes work* afore said ; and, in my apprehension, the preceding thousand years before that *great Sabbath*, are the *six mystical dayes* wherein men should have permission, as I said before, to do those works which they had a desire to be doing, for perfecting their knowledge in *Good and Evil* in this life, after they had, by disobeying *G O D* in our first Parents, entered into a Confederacy with the *Devil*. This sense of that Mystery I received not from men, but, by meditating an Interpretation of the first Chapters of the *Old Testament*, by comparing them with the last Chapters of the *New Testament*, and by what I collected out of that *Prayer* which *Christ* himself left unto us to be a *Pattern* of what we might absolutely pray for ; in regard whatsoever I am taught by him to *pray for*, I am warranted undoubtedly to *believe*. Now, according to the Contents of that *Prayer*, I do believe, that the *Name* of our Heavenly Father shall be hallowed upon Earth, and his *Kingdom* come down visibly among us, and his *Will* be here done as it is in *Heaven* ; which can never be until that *great Sabbath*. I believe also, That all who seek after his *Kingdom* which is to come, with sincerity in the first place, shall be daily fed with the bread of eternal life, and supplied  
with

with all things necessary for prosecuting their Work in the meantime; That our sins shall be forgiven us, as we, by his example, forgive those who have trespassed against us: That in all our tryals and Temptations, whereby GOD exerciseth our Faith, we shall be delivered from whatsoever is *evil* in them, and be at last partakers of his *Kingdom, Power, and Glory*, even here upon *Earth* where we have suffered with him, when that *great Sabbath*, afore-mentioned, begins; and in *Heaven* for ever.

But, you may think, perhaps to your discouragement the mean while, that time is very far off, because by our ordinary Computation of Times and Years, there will seem to be about 300 years unexpired of the last thousand of those 6000 years in which *Anti-christ* with his *Mystery of Iniquity* was permitted to Reign, 666 years, after he had attained to his full power. Nevertheless, let not that infringe the patience of any; For, though GOD is absolute in fulfilling the times promised for the benefit of his *Elect*, he doth not so oblige himself to those times which concern the lengthning out the *Kingdoms* of his *Enemies*, but that they may be shortned by their own actions, according to this saying; *The wicked live not one half their time*. It is probable, that our *Chronology* is defective, some *Chronologers* differing in their Accompt hundreds of years, and they about 80 or 40 years who differ least. Or, if it were not so, the time of our *suffering* may be shortned for the sake of GOD's *Elect*; yea, *Christ* hath promised that it shall be shortned for their sake, *Matth. 24, 22*. And, probably, the shortning the last dayes of Tribulation, will be occasioned by GOD's permitting his and their Adversaries, to be so violent and infatuated in

in their furious prosecutions of malicious Designs to uphold their Tyranny, when they feel it tottering, that they themselves will thereby shorten their own time ; And that the *Kingdoms* of the *Devil*, *Antichrist*, and the *World* will be so divided and confounded in their Designment and Prosecutions that they shall help destroy themselves and their Kingdoms, by their own Actings, and by provoking GOD, (according to his *Conditional Decrees*) to come in, when *Evil* is at the highest pitch of Malignity ; to make it evident, that by his *Power* and *Goodness* alone, *Good* becomes prevalent against *Evil*. And probably some *Dispensations* of *Mercy* in that kind, will be vouchsafed as to the weakening of *Antichrist's* kingdom, betwixt this time, and the year 1666, according to our Computation after the *birth of Christ* ; But that Number of the *Name*, or *Power* of the *Beasts*, whose time of tyrannizing is thereby limited from the last of the times of the distinct *highest Exaltations* of the *two Beasts*, until the full end of their *Powers*, will not be until so many years after the *Passion of our Saviour*, if I have not mis-grounded my Judgment, as I believe I have not. For, at the time of *Christ's Passion*, the last of those Earthly *Monarchies* which have oppressed the *Saints*, was at the highest ; and ever since it hath declined : Their longest time of continuance (as I conceive) being mystically numbered out unto them, in their own *Numerals*, which put altogether in order, according to their distinct *Valuations* singly, can make no more, as these their Characters demonstrate, than M.D.C.L.X.V.I, which is a M. years for the continuance of *Heathen Romes* tyranny, after it was at highest, until it was swallowed up by that *Beast* which arose out of it,

H

(for,

( for, old *Romes* Tyranny continued in the *Civil Government* of that Empire after Christian Emperours had the Title ) The remainder of the aforefaid fum, being DCLXVI, is the time of the Reign of Antichrist (or the *Man of Sin*) after he attained to an *absolute Supremacy*, which will have an end in or about the Seventeenth hundred year after *Chrift's* Nativity, by our Accompt, if *Chronologers* have not mifreckoned the times. This is my Judgment of the *Number of Beaft*. When that day comes, I believe the *Souls under the Altar* will no more cry, *How long L O R D !* We fhall not then think the dayes or years of our fuffering, for *Righteousnefs fake*, were over many ; nor will the *scoffers* then ask any more in derifion, *Where is the Promise of his Coming ?*

Then, how long or fhort a time foever it be, during which, the prefent, or the laft Tryal of the *Saints* muft continue ; Let us confider how little a few years, more or lefs, are in refpect of *Eternity*, and of how fmall confequences all that is which we can fuffer, in comparifon of that reward which is prepared for thofe who overcome by patience. What can we lofe ? Or, what have they loft, who have been translated out of this life, by the cruelty of their Perfecutors, but that which would have been a greater difadvantage had it not been loft ? Perhaps that experience which I have had, in my particular, of GOD's extraordinary ftrengthning me in my Sufferings, by the encrease of Hope and Confolations vouchsafed, may be believed by fome, to the augmentation of their conftancy and comfort ; I do therefore unfeignedly profefs (though I profefs it in much frailty of the Flefh) That if GOD continue his Mercy begun (which I doubt not of) and fhall give me a full draught

draught of those *Cordials*, whereof he hath vouchsafed me a *Taste*, I think I should not repine to undergo for his glory, the heat of those terrible dayes, which are begun, or near approaching: For, I conceive it will not be much hotter than the *Fiery Furnace*, which was heated sevenfold more than usually, for *Shadrack*, *Mefech*, and *Abednego*; and I believe, that to strengthen and preserve me, I should have the same Companion they had in that *Fiery Tryal*, if it might be so much to GOD's glory. Let not then the length or sharpness of any Persecution discourage from a Constant waiting upon GOD, whose Grace will be a sufficient Assistance in all *Probations*. Nor let your imperfect apprehensions of those mysterious expressions, whereby the estate of that *Sabbath* or Kingdom, afore-mentioned, is described, mislead you either into a distrust of the reality thereof, or into any carnal mis-belief, mis-teachings, or mis-actings, by a vain curiosity of seeking to know further than is plainly revealed, before the time. For, *Fancy* is apt to make many erroneous representations; and that which shall be, is darkly expressed, for the exercise of our *Faith*; and we can no more apprehend it, as it is (being in the state wherein we yet are) than Children of a month old, can declare what manner of life they shall here live, when they come to ripe years. It may suffice, that so much is declared and unfolded, by what is fulfilled, and so demonstrated by Allusions to things of which we highly esteem, that it may assure us, there is an unspeakable glory and happiness prepared for all those who *believe*, and suffer for *Righteousness sake*. Our sight, is yet too weak to behold it; Our hearts are too narrow to apprehend it; and that hour

H 2

of

of the day, is not yet come, which will manifest to any, so much as will hereafter be made evident to all.

But, that we may not make our Afflictions and Troubles greater than else they would be, and our Consolations less than they might be by our own defaults ; and so imbitter our Spirits against the Truth, and each other, that *Repentance* and *Reformation* be obstructed thereby ; and lest also, through defect of true *Piety* towards G O D, or of true Charity to *Men*, will be found rather sufferers altogether for our sins, than for *Righteousness sake*, to the making of our sorrows endless in this life ( as it happeneth to many ) or to the rendring of us more wicked and cruel, when our *Sufferings* be removed, than we were before ; to the perpetuating of an unhappy condition hereafter : Be pleased, for prevention thereof, to take notice of a *Triple Memorandum*, which coming suddenly into my thoughts, I shall here insert as necessary for us all to take heed of at this time, though I know it will disadvantage me in the opinion of many. The *First* branch of it, is pertinent to GOD's *Glory* : The *Second*, to the *Civil Government* and *Governors* whereto he hath subjected us : And the *Third*, pertains to all those whom he hath put under their subjection. Observe it well, O ye *British Nations*, and repent of your sins in General and Particular, both against GOD and *Men* ; especially of your intrenchments against GOD's *Prerogative*, and your temporal and spiritual oppressing the members of his Son *Jesus Christ*, by the dishonoring of him in his chief Attributes ; and by the breach of your *Publick Faith*, plighted to Him and his People, against whom very many of us have, in my  
Judgment,

Judgment, much exceeded the *Parallel* afore-mentioned, and all that I find recorded against any other *Nation*. If we expect a Reconciliation to G O D, by a pardon for that, and our other manifold Transgressions, let us acknowledge our sinfulness against the infinite extent of G O D's *Mercy* intended to all *Mankind* in general (which is the first branch of my *Memorandums*) and not limiting it, as many do, suppose they glorify him in so doing, whereas, it is apparently to his dishonour, and will be to the inflaming of his Wrath, when there will be most need of his Fatherly Compassion.

For, I will be bold to aver (though some probably will be offended at it, by whose Charity I have been here in part relieved) that the *brotherly Love* and *true Repentance* whereto I would persuade, will never be effectually attained unto by them, who knowingly, premeditatedly, and wilfully persevere in denying the *Universal Redemption of Mankind* by *Jesus Christ*; seeing thereon depends G O D's most glorious Attribute; and in regard it is that, for which we are much more obliged unto him, than all the rest of his Creatures, he cannot but be highly displeased with all those who confine the extent of that *Mercy*. I know many in these times (some of them in other respects very good and learned men) who think *Universal Redemption* to be a *new Doctrine*, terming it *Arminianism* and *Popery*; but, it is neither new, nor repugnant (as is pretended) to the Orthodox Doctrine of *Election*, *Predestination* and the *Free Grace* of G O D; nor ascribes ought more to *Nature* by the Consequences thereof, than tends to our justifying of G O D, and to our self-condemnation, if that which he hath given us be not husbanded, according as he  
hath

hath and doth enable. The *holy Scriptures* evidence it to all who rightly understand them. So far is it also from being a Novelty (as ignorant hearers are made believe) that it was received and professed for a necessary Truth by the *Churches* of GOD in all Ages since Christ's birth, and contradicted by very few in the first times of Christianity. Yea, it was believed many hundreds of years before *Arminius* was born, or *Poper*y had a being in the world; and will be professed when the Opposers and Traducers of that *Verity* shall be quite rooted out of the *Evangelical Kingdom*. It is, I confess, a Doctrine imbraced by many in the Church of *Rome*; but that makes it not erroneous. If we renounce all things approved of by Hereticks, and which *Antichrist* and his Confederates imbrace and profess, we shall more disadvantage the *Kingdom of Christ* thereby, than they have done by all their Heresies, Idolatries and Superstitions; For they acknowledge the *holy Scriptures*, and all the Articles of our *Creed*; and hold (though in unrighteousness) a great part both of *Moral* and *Evangelical Truths*, by a verbal profession, and with a mixture of humane Traditions; because, if they did not so juggle, they could never have been hopefull to effect what is intended by their *Mystery of Iniquity*. It is the well counterfeiting of *Truth* and *Holiness*, which must compleat the Designs of *Antichrist*; and there is not any one single *Heresie* or *Wickedness* which doth so secretly and so mischievously supplant *Christ*; it undermines the *Foundation* of that *Structure* which open Blasphemies aboveground cannot endanger, and hath already sprung such a *Mine*, to the dividing of *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, (as they are now termed) that they will hardly be reconciled until all Controversies are at an end.

Let



Let us therefore consider well what depends upon it ; how much it concerns the Glory of GOD ; how much he is dishonoured by a contrary belief, and how much it detracts from our own Priviledges and Consolations. G O D's *Mercy* is above all his *Works*. It is the *Crown* and *Dignity* of the KING of Kings, and the Highest of all High-Treafons to clip it. A professed denial of the *Universality of humane Redemption*, seems to me a curfed *Counter-callo*, made and sung by *Devils*, in opposition to that blessed *Nativity-Song*, which was sung by *Angels* at the Birth of CHRIST ; *Glory be to GOD on high, on Earth Peace, and Good will to Men*. For, how was G O D likely to be glorified, *Peace* to be upon the Earth, or his *Good-will* manifested to Men by the incarnation of his Son, if Man's *Redemption* had not been *Universal*, but so narrowed, that it extended to a very few, and those few also left without assurance they were of that small number, whatsoever they should endeavour, if there should be an Exception from that Act of Grace, as many fancy ? Doubtless, if it had been so, it would have given occasion rather of *howling* than of *singing*; and been rather *sad* than *glad tydings*, in regard of that great terrour which might have seized upon all *Mankind*, and caused an *Universal Lamentation*, when they considered how many millions of millions, were certainly exposed to Everlasting Damnation ; how small a number in possibility to be saved, and how few of their dearly beloved Parents, Children and Friends might be of those few, for whom *Christ* took upon him the *humane Nature* Oh ! horrible and unparalell'd Blasphemy ! But blessed be GOD's Name it is not so. When the Children of *Israel* were redeemed from their *Egyptian Bondage*, which  
was

was a type of our *Universal Redemption*, there was not one soul, no not a hoof left behind them : Nor was one soul absolutely excluded from the benefit of *Christ's* Incarnation and Passion ; but they only, who by their own default and unrepented sin, should fall away as they did who perished in the Wilderness. For, GOD hath many times, upon several occasions, passed his *Word*, to ascertain the Universality of his Love to Man without personal respects, where personal sins, without repentance, have not first made the person unacceptable, nay, our incredulity hath put him to his *Oath*, to assure every sinner ; and if nevertheless we still distrust him, continue in our misbelief of his *Word* and *Oath*, and labour to draw others into the same crime ; It cannot be an ordinary Judgement which G O D will at last inflict for so extraordinary and so high an affront, it being a sin more heinous than Murder, Adultery, and all other meer carnal sins put together ; yea more heinous than those the *Jews* committed by their *Idolatrics*, *killing the Prophets*, and *crucifying Christ* in the flesh ; for the last was but a sin against his *Humanity*, and their *Idolatrics* but the ascribing some part of that honour to Creatures which was due to G O D only ; whereas the limiting of G O D's *Universal Grace* in *Christ*, with the concomitant Doctrines, and the Consequences thence raised, and the imputing to G O D, an *eternal Reprobation* of the greatest part of *Mankind*, before they had done good or evil, and for those sins also, which they blasphemously say, he necessitated them to commit, to shew his *Justice*, and manifest his hatred to sin, is a dispoiling GOD of his *Divine Nature*, of his *Goodness*, and an ascribing unto him that which belongs only to the Devil. Oh the Patience of G O D !  
What

What can be so abominable ? They do not only make *Reprobation* older than the father of it the Devil, but make G O D also the Author of his wickedness, in necessitating him to be a *Devil*, and consequently Author of all the wickedness committed by all the Devils in Hell, and all the wicked men upon earth ; which appears to me so horrible an Impiety, that I wonder not to see the World so full of Plagues and Sins ; and Sins & Sinners become such Plagues to each other as they are ; nor can I believe there will ever be less Plagues, where that Blasphemy is professed and indulged as Orthodox Doctrine, until it be repented of ; nor shall I marvel if my words be misunderstood, and my good meanings mis-interpreted, if G O D's *Word* be so mistaken, and his *Love* so ill rewarded. I know the bitterness and uncharitableness of their spirit, who shall be obstinate in this Judgment, yet am neither afraid nor ashamed for any respects to declare my Conscience herein ; or in whatsoever else I think may concern G O D's *Glory* and the Peace of my *Country*. If I think any to be in an Errour, I will peaceably do the best I can to reclaim them, but attempt nothing to destroy them ; for that is an *Anti-christian Principle*, and I abhor it. Oh let us be more heedful to avoid it, and more conscientious in acknowledging our Destruction to be only and originally of the *Devil* and of our selves ; I confess that G O D (*who would have all men to be saved*) hath provided means of salvation for all, without excluding any, who first excludes not himself by his personal sins and impenitency : and (that our manifold sins may be forgotten) I desire we may henceforward believe both his preventing and assisting Grace, shall be vouchsafed to all those who shall ask for it in Faith, or

I

have

have not wilfully rejected it being offered.

In like manner ( for, I now come to the second branch of my *Memorandum* ) if we desire an *external Peace* may be settled and continued so among us, that we may serve the LORD in *Holiness and Righteousness*, let us be conscientiously careful that we intrench not injuriously upon the *Civil Government* whereto GOD hath subjected us, how oppressive soever it shall be, or seemeth to be unto any of us in particular, during the time wherein GOD gives it a Sovereignty over us. For, all *Power, was and is* of him by his *Grace, or Permission*; not only that which was *Patriarchal* in *Adam* and *Noah*; with that which was established for a time in *Moses, Joshua, and the Judges of Israel*; and that which is called Ecclesiastical in the visible *Church of Christ*; but all those tyrannizing Powers, Governments and Governors also, which have been in the world ever since the Creation until now, were *gracious, or permissive effects* of that longing after the knowledge of *Good and Evil*, which corrupted our first Parents, whose Posterity, were permitted to elect such *Governments and Governors* as they best liked, till some of them lost that Privilege by their own folly, as the *Jews*, and others have done. Thus it was in all times and Nations, after the natural and *Paternal Government* ceased by the death of *Adam* and *Noah*, except that which was *Supernaturally* Constituted over the *Jews* in the dayes of *Moses*; *That*, and the *Paternal Government* being conferred, the one by *Grace*, and the other by *Nature*, were Branches of the *Fifth Monarchy* ( as many now call the *Kingdom of Christ* ) which indeed is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, ever one and the same ;  
in

in regard, that *Providential Government*, which is and was in GOD the Father by right of *Creation* ; and exercised imperfectly by *Adam, Noah, Moses* and his *Successors*, was translated to GOD the Son, who is the only and true *Catholick King* ( though *Antichrist* hath given that Title to one of his Vassals ) yea, though this *Government* hath seemed a long time suspended, and been intruded upon by the Usurpation of Tyrants, in most parts of the world, ever since the dayes of *Nimrod*, he will at last assume his Kingdom, and the Government thereof, in his own Person, when the time appointed is come. In the mean space, his *Father* and *He himself*, have permitted others to make *Kings*, and to be *Kings* and *Governors*, according as they could effect it by their own Policy and Power. This was one product of eating the *forbidden Tree* ; and of man's desired *knowledge of Good and Evil* ( especially his experience in what is *evil* ) hath been much advanced in all Nations and Generations, by the Exorbitances of such *Governors*, and by the *Popular Idolizing*, and base flattering their *Kings* and *Governors* into a foolish conceit they were more than *Men*, and by deifying them, as the *Romans* and others did, until they became worse than *Beasts*, and little better than *Devils* to the rest of *Mankind* : in which fordid Flattery, the *Priests* in all times were most instrumental. Therefore, GOD permitted for a punishment of their wickedness and folly ( and to perfect their desired knowledge of *Good and Evil*, as aforesaid, the *Kingdoms of the Earth* ( as it is said, *Dan. 4. 17.* ) to be governed by the basest of men ; which will never be otherwise, until the People shall reform themselves by a true *Self-denial*, and until that is fulfilled,

which hath been prefaged in thefe *Verses* :

“ *A King shall willingly un-self un-King,  
 “ And, thereby grow far greater than before ;  
 “ The Clergy, to contempt themselves will bring ,  
 “ And, thereby, Piety shall thrive the more.*

When a *King* ( or the *Civil Governor* or *Governors*, by whatsoever Title they Reign ) shall quite lay aside all those tyrannous *Prerogatives*, which were usurped by the Emperours and Kings of the Nations, who knew not GOD ; and when they shall Govern according to the *divine Law*, which he hath declared in his *Evangelical Word*, and had once written in the hearts of men, then shall a *Righteous Government* be established ; and when the *Clergies Prevarications* shall bring upon them a general Contempt, such an endeavour will be in season. When this comes to pass, ( which is contingent, and may be or not be ) *Righteousness* will begin to flourish, or else never, until *Christ* assumes his *Universal Kingdom*. But, that *King* or *Supream Power*, who shall conform to the fore-going *Prediction*, shall be the *Protarrhon*, and have the honour of the first true *Vice-regency* under *Jesus Christ*, within his own *Dominions*. There shall the Throne of Evangelical Righteousness first begin to be established ; or, at least, there shall be the first evident preparation for that *Monarchy*.

It must then be acknowledged ( *Kings* and their *Subjects* being Relatives ) that all the mischieves which have befallen to *Mankind* in all Nations, have proceeded equally from themselves ; yet, as I said before, by GOD's permissive *Providence*, for a  
 just

juft punishment of their fins, by each other ; and the *People* muft submit patiently to the yoke, until he vouchsafeth to take it off : For, as it hath given *Wickednefs*, *Wicked-men*, and *Devils* opportunities to manifelt their Natures toward the perfecting of an experimental knowledge in *Evil*, to their fhame ; So, it hath occafioned alfo the manifeltation of the *Juftice*, *Mercy*, and *Goodnefs* of GOD, to his Glory, in making good what he had promifed to his *Eleft*, by his Providential changing of *Governments* and *Governors*, fetting up, pulling down, enlarging or reftaining, as may beft conduce to the punishment of Sin, to the encouragement of Vertue, to the exercifing of the Patience, Faith, Humility, Conftancy, Love, and other Graces of the *Saints* ; as alfo to the improving in them an experimental knowledge of that which is *Good*, together with a deteftation of all that is *Evil* ; that, they might at laft overcome *Evil* with *Goodnefs* : which gives an answer to all thofe *Queries*, which have often been propofed by the Children of GOD, when they have obferved the Prosperity of the *wicked*, whilft they are afflicted.

Thefe things confidered, it will be a Transgreffion againft the *Providence* of GOD, if any private *Perfons* or *Parties*, howfoever oppreffed thereby, fhall endeavour by *Preaching*, *Writing*, or *Speaking* feditioufly ( much more by attempting it in an Hoftile manner ) the innovating, changing, or difturbng the *Government* or *Governors* whereunto they are fubjected ; and they are Rebels againft GOD's *Ordinance*, there being no other ordinary means left to the *People*, who are by them oppreffed, but humbly Petitioning, declaring their Grievances, and pleading for their due Priviledges by legal Proceedings, and  
by

by Appealing to GOD for redrefs of their Sufferings ; who doth heed all Oppreffions, and will provide Deliverers, as he did for the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, when there was no likelihood of a Deliverance. For, when Princes infatuated by their own pride and corruption, or by the giddinefs of their *young Counfellors*, *over-voting wifer men*, as appears in *Rehoboam*, fhall fo add to the provocations of their Forefathers, by their personal impieties againft GOD, or by fo oppreffing the People, as *Rehoboam* did, he will either rend from them the hearts of the greateft part of them, as he did from that foolifh King, or by fome other way ; and a Remedy will foon after follow, without any irregular endeavors, by the private *Heads* or *Hands* of any one of his *Saints* ; which would but exasperate their oppreffors, give them thofe advantages which they watch for, to colour the utter destroying of thofe whom they opprefs, with an appearance of executing *Juftice* upon them ; and it would defer alfo that *Deliverance* which is Providentially defigned.

Therefore, not prefuming as their *Counfellor*, but, as their Humble *Remembrancer*, I do hereby defire, that the *King* and his *Counfellors*, as alfo the *People*, might be hereby put feafonably in mind, to confult with the Laws of GOD, of *Nature*, of their own *Nation*, and with their own *Confcienccs*, what they will dictate unto them, concerning their Duties to GOD, and to each other in fuch Cafes : And, that they may ufe their *rational Faculties* to that purpofe, I offer to their ferious difquifition, thefe following *Queries* :

1. *Whether,*



1. *Whether, that which was not ordained for its own sake, but for the sake of that which was precedent, and more worthy, ought to be preferred before that, for whose sake only it was ordained?*
2. *Whether, there can be Treason committed by one of any two Parties against the other, between whom there is not a Mutual Trust, and Reciprocal Obligation?*
3. *Whether, if that Allegiance and Mutual Trust, which is between two Parties, be by one of them evidently infringed, the other be not thereby, absolutely freed from that Allegiance?*
4. *Whether, it be in the just Power, of any humane Authority to make that Treason, which is not Treason by the Law of Nature and Trust; or any thing, to be that which really it is not?*
5. *Whether a whole Nation, or the greatest part thereof, can be guilty of Treason against their Supreme Magistrate, failing of his Trust, in that for which he was ordained, in the judgment of the greatest number of those who intrusted him; and whether they who are Confederates with him, in the breach of that Trust, and in oppressing the People, ought to be reckoned as a part of that People?*
6. *Whether a considerable part of those People, who are peaceable in their lives and conversations, and seek nothing but an enjoyment of those Freedoms and Rights which belong unto them by the Laws of GOD, Nature, and the Nation, may not without just blame, Petition to be freed from those Oppressions, which are imposed by humane Laws; and*  
when

*when they who are violently invaded in their Possessions, or in the exercise of their Consciences toward G O D, according to his Fundamental Laws, may not warrantably stand upon their guard (though they may not take up Offensive Arms) as well as a private person, may Se defendendo, endeavour to preserve his life, and his Hereditary Possessions, from an injurious Assailant, in which case (as I conceive) he is Indemnified by the Law of our Nation ?*

7. *Whether, all Oaths, Engagements, and Covenants whatsoever, taken, entred into and made, by compulsion, contrary to the Laws of G O D and Nature, be not void ipso facto, and to be repented of rather than kept, when the Conscience is rightly informed ?*

These *Queries*, being rightly resolved, both *Kings* and their *Subjects* may be truly informed how they ought to regulate their *Judgements* and *Actions* in relation to each other, for the preservation of their honour, peace, and safety ; but, *private Persons* who shall undertake to Resolve them, will perhaps be thought more bold than wise ; and they will rarely be Resolved impartially, either by any *Supream Magistrate*, who is not a true Lover of Justice ; or by any of the *Commonalty*, who prefers *Licentiousness* before a true *Christian, or manly Freedom* ; much less by any of them, whose irregular Courses are destructive to their *Kings*, their *Country*, and to their *well-being*. Therefore, instead of giving my private sense upon the said *Queries*, I leave that to those whom it more concerns, and advise all those who think themselves oppressed (by those who act under,

under, and for the *Supream Power*) and are doubtful how to behave themselves in such wise, that they may neither transgress the Ordinances of GOD, nor give occasion of offence to their *Governors*) to put on the pure white *Ephod* or Surplice of a sincere unbiassed Conscience, and repair to that *Urim* and *Thummin*, whereby the Secrets of the LORD are in all straits and difficulties made known to such as fear him : And, in the mean time, I being neither *for* or *against* the Power of *Kings*, or the *Priviledges* of the *People*, further than they are agreeable to the Laws of GOD and *Nature*, will declare what my own practice hath been in these late staggering times, hoping it may be of good use to some, and no way hurtful to any.

Though I have been oft Imprisoned, and my honest and peaceable Intentions questioned upon misapprehensions and mis-informations, I never endeavoured ought by Factious Confederacy with others, or in my single Capacity, by Word or Writing against the *Supream Person*, or *Power* in being. It is otherwise affirmed by some, who ( I think ) neither know what I have *done*, *written*, or *said*, but by hear-say ; and a Person of some quality ( who seldom read ought save scurrilous and obscene Pamphlets ) charged me before many, in my absence, to have been a Troubler and Scandalizer of all *Governments* now fifty years. *Ahab* in such-like words charged *Elias* to be the Troubler of *Israel*, because he had reproved his wickedness, who was the greatest troubler thereof in his time : and the same troublesome is imputed to every one in his time, who conscientiously reproveth *Vice*, when Wickedness and Folly are predominant, how modestly soever he doth

K

it.

it. But, if all my *Actings*, *Writings*, and *Speakings* were known and considered, it would manifestly appear, that neither my *Principles* or *Endeavours* ever tended to ought, destructive or dishonorable to the *Supream Magistrate* possessing the Throne, but to that which was for the preservation of his honour and safety, if rightly understood ; and that, I have unfeignedly exhorted others to the like obedience. To our present *Governor*, I have no way failed in obedience since his Restauration ; and think these *Nations* more than ordinary obliged to that duty, in regard GOD hath given them those *Governments*, and that *King*, which the greatest number of them desired, when they called him Home unto them from a long Exile : As also, because, I am confident that miraculous Restauration was vouchsafed to be a *Test* both of *His* and our Obedience to GOD's Commands ; and of our conformity to that which he justly expects should be performed by *King* and *People* to Him, and by them reciprocally to each other. According to proof thereof upon the *Test*, such will be the sequels respectively to all *Parties* ; for I am not deceived in the *Say-Master* ; nor is this unwarantably declared by me, though I my self am but one in the Furnace of *Purgation* and *Probation* among the rest. GOD brought in the *King* without blood-shed, and without being engaged to any ( except only in a few Promises upon the word of a King ) that he might depend on G O D only, and dispense *Justice* and *Mercy* impartially to all : which my hope is he will do, when he is dis-intangled from such inconveniences thereto obstructive, as his late troubles occasioned ; and when he is better acquainted with the temper and constitution of these *Nations*, to which  
he

he was long a stranger, even from his Infancy. I pray GOD, that neither our sins, nor his own, nor their Actings who are to him what the Sons of *Zerviah* were to *David*, prove hinderances thereunto, *by being too hard for him* ; of which I am somewhat fearful.

This brings to mind the *third Branch* of my *Memorandum* afore-mentioned, which I had almost forgotten, and which concerns those, as aforesaid, whom GOD hath now put visibly under subjection to him, and whose distempers were much allayed by many fair Promises ( or pretendings at least ) that they should enjoy their *Consciences*, and those estates which were granted ( and as they thought secured ) unto them by the *Publick Faith* of the *Nations*. The neglect of Performance to those purposes according to expectation ( though outward clamors were upon vain hopes awhile calmed ) may have evil effects when least feared : For *Unfaithfulness* and *Unmercifulness* GOD will avenge, though men wink at it ; especially a *National unfaithfulness* ( if not repented and satisfied for, seasonably in some measure ) whatsoever colourable excuses may be alleaged, will be avenged, as is manifest in the Case of the *Gibeonites*. All the *Three Nations* are engaged by their *Common Faith*, given in pledge directly or indirectly, both for the *Liberty of Conscience* in relation to GOD, and for making good in some proportion those Debts and Contracts, whereunto many were drawn, under Pious and Civil pretences, authorized by that visible Power which was then in being, and countenanced and submitted unto, by the most eminent Persons of all Degrees, Judgements, and Professions, as well as by the greatest number of the People, without

any open contradiction ; Thereupon, they contributed their Estates for support of that, which they thought a lawful Power, even to the ruining of many of their Families ( as it hath since happened ) who submitted thereunto conscientiously in the simplicity of their hearts ( as many others did by compulsion, and some for sinister respects ) in obedience only to them, who acted in the Name of a Lawful *Supream Authority*, which in reason excuses them, who are not to judge the Actings of their *visible Superiors*, submitted unto by the whole Nation, or the greatest part thereof as aforesaid. The *Power now in being* also, together with many eminent Members of the *former Power* ( seemingly at least to be concurrent ) did, if I and many other mistake not, voluntarily pretend, both before and after the *Restoration* of this *Power*, to indulge *tender Consciences*, and to make some competent satisfaction to them who had conscientiously hazarded their Persons, and trusted out their Estates, as aforesaid ; and who justly expect that their Loyal submission without blood-shed should be rewarded according to explicate or implicate Promises and Declarations, wherein they confided ; and for which ( hoping it will be at last performed ) they do patiently suffer in the mean time, beseeching G O D to remove the Confusions and Burthens, wherewithal they, and many other in these Nations, are at this present oppressed and involved. Now then, that their and our Prayers may be effectual to incline G O D to have Mercy upon us all in general, let the neglect of that expected *Indulgence* be taken into consideration, and somewhat be performed according to what is hoped for, to testify our thankful acknowledging the large extent of G O D's Mercy both to *King* and  
*People,*

*People*, for bringing us so peaceably into a way of *Reconciliation*, which may possibly be perfected and continued, if we prudently and gratefully pursue it, and not make our selves liable again to those great debts and trespasses which were forgotten, by taking our Brethren by the throats, for failings less considerable, and by unmerciful destroying them and their Families ; especially, by being severe unto them for seeming deficiencies relating to GOD and the Conscience, with which none have ought to do, but GOD only, who is the proper Judge between Himself and mens Consciences. But, for ought I perceive, every *Dissenting Party*, is, and will be Judge in his own Cause, whomsoever else it concerns. And we are all I confess, even the best of us, somewhat over-biassed as to *Self-Interest*. *Princes* and their *Councils* will be sole Judges of that which they think concerns the Peace of their Kingdoms and Self-Interest ; *Prelates* and their appurtenant Officers, will be Judges of that which they conceive pertains to the Discipline of their own *Church*, and their temporary Dignities ; and *Conscientious men*, suppose themselves as competent Judges, next under GOD, of what belongs to the peace of their *Consciences*, as either of the former, and resolve to act according to their own judgements, or to suffer what shall be imposed upon them : For, as their Persecutors may peradventure say as the *Jews* did when they Crucified *Christ*, that, *they have a Law, by which these ought to suffer* ; So they may say, that GOD and *Nature have Laws, by which it ought to be otherwise* ; and to those Laws they may, and I do for my part, appeal. Let therefore, if it be so, these *three Nations* seek unto GOD, as one man, and humbly Petition the *King*, in his own Person,

son, that, to establish his Throne in *Righteousness*, all Publick and Private Grievances may be impartially and effectually considered hereafter, and not slighted as heretofore. That, in things relating to *GOD* and the *Conscience*, men may be governed according to his *divine Law only*; and in all *Civil Matters*, by such humane Laws as the People *have chosen*, and *shall chuse*, agreeable to the Word of *GOD* and the Law of *Nature*. Which Exhortation I propose not to ingratiate my self either with the People, or the present Government to any self end: For, the *Restraints* and *Sufferings* which have been imposed on me, have been more advantageous than all the *Liberties* or *Preferments* they can confer; and were I put to chuse, whether I would enjoy the greatest earthly Glory, or be exposed to the greatest earthly Torments for a good Conscience; I would as soon chuse the latter as the first, if *GOD* might be more glorified thereby: Indeed, I would chuse neither of them, because I know not in which of those estates I should most honour God; but leave it absolutely unto him, to dispose of me as he pleaseth; and will not desire (muchless attempt) any thing for my personal security, or for enjoyment of my Conscience, by any unjustifiable act.

It hath been said, That *the Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by violence*; yet, let us now be cautious that we seek not to make passage into it, by a *Carnal violence*, and by the *Temporal Sword* (which Sword belongs principally to the *Kingdoms of this World*) lest we perish by that *Sword* as many have done. Our *Saviour* said to *Peter*, when he smote off the ear of *Malchus* in his defence, *Put up the Sword*: for in truth it was not then in season, nor is so now.

Had



Had either a natural or a supernatural Resistance been then seasonable, our blessed *Saviour* (as he at that time said) could have prayed to his *Father*, and have had *more than twelve Legions of Angels* immediately sent unto him for his Rescue. Those *Angels*, when the time appointed comes, will appear under the Conduct of *Michael* their Arch-Angel, to do that execution upon the Usurpers of *Christ's Kingdom*, which hath been long since foretold, and which we daily pray for. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal*; nor shall the *Conquest* which we expect, be obtained by any other *Sword* in the hands of the *Saints*, but that *Two-edged Sword*, proceeding out of his Mouth, whom *John* saw standing between the seven golden Candlesticks, sharpened by the Faith, Hope, Love, Patience, Prayers, and Constancy of the LAMB's followers; which *Conquest* at or about the end of the last of those *six dayes*, aforesaid, of a 1000 years a piece; or at the *shortning of that day*, and at the beginning of the *great Sabbath*, which GOD sanctified at the *Creation*, will be accomplished. Till that time, the *Saints* are patiently to wait upon GOD, and permit his Enemies to enjoy their time, without grudging or fretting at their prosperity, as *David* counsels in his 37 *Psalms*. In order to their final Destruction, some proceedings will every year be made, whilst the *sixth Vial* is pouring out (and which is already in a great measure diffused) and probably a *signal progression*, in some evident particular, will be vouchsafed betwixt this and the end of 1666 years after the birth of *Christ*; and be compleated at or about the end (as I have before declared) of the thousand six hundred sixty and sixth year after his *Passion*, if the Foundation of  
my

my Calculations fail not. The *Planets* in their Courses are moving toward those *Constellations* and *Influences*, which will shortly demonstrate they are fighting for the People of GOD against their Enemies, as they fought against *Sisera* and his Army ; and when GOD destroyed the Host of five Kings, with hailstones, who Warred against the *Gibeonites*, whilst they went under the Protection of *Joshua*. But, we have a surer *Word* to trust unto than the *Book of the Creatures* (whose Characters our Folly hath now made obscure) even GOD's *written Word* and *Spirit* ; and the Prophecies in that *Word* contained, will shortly be fulfilled ; and then the knowledge of *Good and Evil*, as to all sublunary things, being experimentally known in full, such an end will be put to all their strugglings for the Victory, that our *Scoffers* will from thenceforth no more say, or think, that all things are to continue as they are ; but they who now insolently persecute the *Saints*, will, miserably affrighted, sneak into Dens and Caverns of the Earth, wishing the falling Mountains might cover them from his Presence whom they have persecuted and despised. GOD's *White Banner* hath been displayed among us a long time heretofore, to invite us by fair means to come in, and make our peace : His *Red Colours* are now hung forth, and though it hath already cost us much blood and treasure, we return not unto him ; and if we delay it until his *Black Flagg* be set up, it will be then too late to Retreat without a mischief : for, they who are to come upon the *black and pale Horses*, will immediately follow to do execution.

It is high time to look about us, and take heed what this *Spirit saith unto the Churches*, typified by  
the

*the seven Churches in Asia*, wherein the state of the most eminent Congregations, which are Members of the *Catholick Church* in all Ages, are concerned ; as is also that *Universal Church* in all the Contents of *St. John's Apocalyps*, throughout her several Ages, until the end of the *Mystery of Iniquity*. The *sixth Trumpet* (as I believe) hath sounded, and is yet sounding. The *third great Wo* will come forth. A *Mystical Earthquake* hath already shaken down a *Tenth part* of the *malignant City*: The *Nations*, being both affrighted and angry, are labouring to repair the Breaches, and have partly skinned over some of their putrifying Wounds, with Patches and Plaisters ; and like the old *Egyptians*, (their true types) encrease the works of Bondage and Slavery, to the suppressing of GOD's People, within their Jurisdictions, because they perceive them endeavouring to separate from them: But, the time is near, wherein the true *Israelites*, and their *Oppressors*, will receive the Rewards respectively prepared, and due unto them by GOD's Judgments promenced against the one, and his gracious Promises to the other ; though his Enemies struggle yet against him like *Pharoah* and his Armies in the *Red Sea*, when their Chariot-wheels were taken off, and while the waves on either side stood heaped up ready to swallow them. The *Grand City*, being divided into *three parts*, will ere long fall, with every subordinate *Power, Kingdom, City* and *Society* thereto belonging ; and *wo* to all them who have not separated from her by repentance. *Her abominations are come into remembrance before G O D* ; Her sins are almost full ripe, and she is become an habitation of Devils, and a recep-

L

tacle

*tacle for every unclean bird: all Nations have drunk the Cup of her Fornications, and are besotted and bewitched with her Sorceries and Inchantments: The Merchants of the Earth are enriched by the abundance of her carnal Delicacies, and by her Traffick in spiritual and temporal Merchandizes, for they have traded together, not only, for Gold, Silver, Pretious Stones, Pearls, fine Linnen, Silks, Purple, Scarlet, Vessels of Brasse, Iron, Wood, and Marble, Spices, Odours, Oynments, Oyl, Wine, Wheat, Beasts and Chariots, but also for the Bodies and Souls of men; according to what was prophesied; pretending to settle upon their Chapmen, Possessions in Heaven, that they might cheat them and their Heirs of their Inheritances upon Earth. Their Formal Devotions being of the same nature and value, with such as were in use among the old Heathen Idolaters (and for the most part borrowed from their Idol Temples) will not avail them in the day of their Visitation; but be cast out as unholy things, fit for nothing but to be trampled under foot and destroyed, with all those Trumperies which the Founders of the *Mystery of Iniquity* have raked together out of *Judaism* and *Gentilism*, to trim up a *will-Worship*. They, who dote on them, shall perish with them, and GOD's People whom they now oppress and reproach, shall be delivered from their scorns and oppressions.*

If they, with whom GOD hath intrusted the *Civil Power*, shall joyn with her in oppressing his People, he himself will deliver them from all their oppressive Actings and Constitutions, who by a corrupt exercise of their Authority, are more or less at enmity with his Kingdom; and persecutors  
of

of his Saints, as turbulent and seditious Persons, for professing their Consciences, and not complying with them in their Abominations, and vain Inventions, repugnant to the dictates of his Word and Spirit, who is their *Sovereign Paramount*: Yea, so many of the *Civil Governors* and Magistrates, as in their publick or personal actings, adhere finally to *Antichristianism* in the essentials thereof, shall be therewith destroyed: But, they who Conform to the *Kingdom* and Government of *Christ*, shall be thereunto admitted, and therewith honoured. *Be wise therefore, O ye Kings, and learn what ye are to do, you that are Judges of the People*; Let not the *Kings and Rulers of the Earth, bind themselves together in their Counsels against the L O R D and his Anointed, nor the murmuring People imagine vain things*; For, GOD who sits in *Heaven derides their attempts, and manure all their opposition, will set his King upon the holy Hill of Sion*, Psal. 2. *Amen.*

These things considered, our future *Repentance* and *Reformation* will not alone consist in forsaking our Transgressions against the moral Law, and the impudent prophaneſs whereof we are guilty, by meer carnal sins, but in timely dissenting also every *spiritual wickedness*, by coming out of *Babylon*, and desisting from complying with her, and especially by razing out the Mark of the Beast, if we have in any mode received it; which is not to be performed by a local departure or separation; but, by a relinquishment of their Superstitions and Idolatries, and by avoiding the *mark of the Beast*, both in the *hand* and *forehead*, which I conceive not to be any thing forcibly imposed upon men against their wills, as *Oaths, Stigmatizings, or Conformity* with

L 2

them

them in things indifferent. But, I judge that *Mark* to be a voluntary approving the Power of the *Beast*, and an adhering to him or his *Image*, by justifying their tyrannies, professing their Idolatries, and by openly or secretly persecuting the followers of the LAMB; For, these Qualifications knit together with an *&c*, will make such a perfect *Character*, whereby to distinguish them from the Disciples of *Christ*, that they shall be privileged to buy and sell, or to enjoy any place of Power, Honour, or Profit within his usurped Jurisdiction, which he exerciseth, at several *times*, and under *various Notions*: For, I conceive, that the *first and second Beast*, mentioned in the *Revelation*, as also, the *Image of the Beast*; The *Skarlet Whore*, with her Cup of Fornications; The *Red Dragon*, The *False Prophet*, the *seven Heads*, the *ten Horns*, the *smoke* which ascended out of the Bottomless Pit, and the *Locusts* proceeding out of that *smoak*, do all together make up but one *Mystical Body of Iniquity*, as it was by degrees produced, active and manifested in several times, according to the true nature thereof in every particular part. The *first Beast*, being the fourth and last *humane tyranny*, described by *Daniel* in the last of the four Beasts, whereof he had a Vision in the Reign of *Belshazer*, is that Monster out of which all the Appurtenances of the said *Mystery* successively branched. The *second Beast* is that mixture of temporal and spiritual *Oppressions* and *Wickednesses* which sprouted up from the first, by Satanical Delusions and fleshly Impostures: It is called the *Image of the Beast*, because of the manifold resemblances which it retains of heathenish *Romes* Cruelties, Pride, and Superstitions; and their

their forming of it into that *Image*, was partly (as I judge) to colour and countenance their *Novelties* and wicked *Impostures* with an appearance of venerable *Antiquity*, and with a *ſucceſſive Authority*, which is one of their chief boaſts ; and it was partly to ſhare alſo among themſelves the *Dignities* and *Profits*, which were formerly enjoyed by the *Flamines*, *Arch-Flamines*, and other *Prieſts* among the *Gentiles*, who had large Priviledges and Poſſeſſions : It is expreſſed by a *Red Dragon*, in reſpect of the bloody Perſecutions thereby raiſed in the *Primitive Church* ; It is called a *Whore arrayed in Skarlet*, with a *golden cup of Fornications in her hand*, to ſignifie the carnal Pompe and Pleaſures whereby it ſhould infatuate and bewitch the great men of the World. It is likened to a *False Prophet*, to intimate the *counterfeit Sanctity* and *Gravity*, whereby it ſhould delude fooliſh Kings and Nations : The *Smoke* aſcending out of the bottomleſs Pit, implies the Jugglings and Sophiſtications, whereby they ſhould becloud the Truth, and darken mens underſtandings with fictitious Gloſſes and falſe Interpretations. The *Locuſts*, preſignified that innumerable company of Locuſt-like unprofitable Cardinals, Abbots, Prelates, Monks, Fryars, Jeſuites, and ſuch-like devouring Animals, as were afterward bred and brought forth in that *ſmoke*, and now ſwarm into every part of the World, to the devouring, not only of the Fruits of the Earth, but to the deſtroying of the Fruits of Grace likewiſe, in the bud and bloſſome. The *ſeven Heads*, ſignified their uſurping *old Romes* claim of *Supremacy*, over all Kings and Nations in the Earth, when her *ſeven Hills* wore the Imperial Crown. The *ten Horns*

*Horns* may betoken, that addition of *temporal Power*, which it would acquire by subjecting and enslaving Kings, Kingdoms, and Republicks, to the throne of *Antichrist*; and by joyning the *temporal Sword*, to the imaginary *Keyes* of *St. Peter*, until the gross Impostures of that *man of Sin*, or *mystical Whore*, should be by them discovered, as they will be ere long, provoking the Kings of the Earth rather out of self respects, then in any regard of *Christs* Kingdom, to begin to hate the *Strumpet*, and prey upon her flesh.

I am suspicious, that I may be suddenly deprived of the Means and Liberty which I yet have to express my mind in publick; Therefore, being unwilling, to leave unmentioned any *Notion* coming at this time to my Remembrance, whereby *Repentance* may be hastened, *Concord* increased, and things prevented which may be destructive to *common Peace*; And, in regard, *teeming Transgressions*, are or may be at this time occasioned, by the Imposing and Refusing of *Oaths*, to the multiplying of troubles and Imprisonments, not only upon persons, who are thought unpeaceably affected, but, to the oppressing and total ruining also of many innocent Families, whose *Masters* are conscientiously afraid of all Oaths; I am resolved (notwithstanding it may be to my personal disadvantage) to declare my Judgment concerning that, and some other Particulars, which I conceive may conduce to the dis-insnaring of many, whose misunderstandings have exposed themselves and others to great hazards. My personal refusing or taking of such *Oaths*, as I hear are tendred, cannot bring either outward detriment or profit unto me, because



cause, I have neither Estate or Liberty, which will be thereby lost or saved, nor so much as hope of any future Preferment in the World ; therefore (with out self-ends) I do voluntarily declare, for the sake of others only (not judging the Consciences of any who are of another opinion) that I think, if the *Supream Power*, or *Person*, be doubtful upon probable grounds, of any Subjects Loyalty, they, or he, may for their own, or the Publick security and safety, require it by an *Oath*, so far forth as the Laws of GOD, Nature, and the Nation, do oblige or permit. For, Allegiance and Fealty are due from all Subjects, to the *Power*, and *Persons* whom GOD hath set over them, so long as he continues a visible possessionary Power, able to Protect them out of an Usurpers hands ; yea, so long as he is present with them to encourage them in their Loyalty by his Righteous actings or Sufferings : therefore, I know no reason, why an Engagement by *Oath* should be denied to him or them who have bound themselves by the like Obligation to be their *Leige Lords*, and to govern them according to the Laws of GOD and their Country. Upon this consideration, I never refused the *Oath of Allegiance*, to any possessionary Power or Person, claiming or exercising a *Sovereign Authority* without opposition ; and I conceive I deserved as little blame in so doing, as is usually imputed to the Inhabitants of a besieged City, submitting to their Conquerors, when they are over-powered by an Enemy, and disserted by their *Officer in Chief* ; for who is bound to resist, when the LORD of Hosts appears against them ? Of the *Oath of Supremacy*, I made as little scruple : For, as I understand it,

( and

( and as King *James* expounded the same ) it intends no more than the other, except only an exclusion of all *Forreign Powers* ; if ( as I think it is ) it be the same *Oath* which was heretofore tendred to me when I was a *Commissioner of the Peace*. That *Oath*, as I remember, enjoyned an acknowledgement of the *King's* Power over *all Persons* within his own Dominions, as head Governor, subordinate to *Christ* only, in all Causes whatsoever, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil ; and not, as many fancy, that he hath a Power *over the Causes*, or a *Co-headship* with *Christ* ; for, these were ridiculous Claims and Acknowledgements, in regard no *Natural* or *Politick-Head* can suit with the Spiritual and Mystical Body of *Christ Jesus*, nor the Power of any *Earthly King* make a *Righteous Cause* to be unjust, or an *unjust Cause* to be righteous ; though it be too often, made so to appear by an abused Authority ; of which abuse, there is at this present great likelihood and jealousie touching a Cause now depending and relating to Persons in this Jayl, wherein I am a Prisoner ; and I am suspitious that somewhat is endeavouring, which may redound to the dishonour of GOD and the *King*. All *Oaths* given or taken contrary to Law, being void *ipso facto*, as soon as they are taken, ought to be repented of, by those who took them either ignorantly or through fear, and make them to be the greater offenders who Impose them, though that doth not totally excuse the Takers of such *Oaths*, upon compulsion. Indeed, so little regard is made of *Oaths* in these dayes in many Cafes, especially by *Witnesses* and *Furors* in Courts of Judicature, that it was never more truly averred of any Land, than now of this,

that

that *it mourneth because of Oaths* : For every man's Estate, Life and Credit, is in hazard, by Suborners and false Witneffes ; infomuch, that it were well with us if the severity of *Tennes*, and *Tenedia Bipermiss*, were here revived, to terrifie For swearers and false-Witneffes ; lest impudent perjurd Persons swear honest men out of all they have. An *Oath*, though it be abused, is the usual and lawful *medium*, both by divine and humane Authority, to evidence Truths in Controversie between man and man, and relating to the Common Peace ; and in my Judgment, not unlawful in private Differences, when in Charity and Reason it is needful to ascertain matters of Consequence, the doubting whereof may be hurtful to him, who is incredulous of what is affirmed, or else of what may be injurious to another person : For, though our *Saviour* said, that whatsoever in our *Communication* ( to which his words are to be restrained ) is more than YEA, and NAY, *cometh of evil* ; yet a further Asseveration may not be *absolutely evil*, being necessitated either by an evil Custom in him who *Swears* when there is no need of an *Oath* ; or else by an evil causeless distrust in the Hearers ; and therefore in serious Matters ( as it appears by *Christ's* own practice in such cases ) more is sometimes requisite than a bare *Asseveration*. The word *Verily*, double ( which is equivalent with *Infaith*, and *Introth* in our language ) was often added by him in his Affirmations to confirm them ; and the former may, without just blame, be otherwhile added by us, though many ( who do therein, as it were *Tithe Mint and Annis* ) are offended at such additions, ignorantly supposing them to be *Oaths*.

M

Never-

Nevertheless, I am so tender of offending their Consciences, who scruple at such Niceties, that I deny my self liberty, even in many such indifferent things, except I casually slip into them through inadvertency : and I judge not uncharitably of those who dare *not Swear at all*, because they have a *written Word* inducing them to be of that Judgment, *James* 5. 12. where it is said, *Above all things, Swear not, neither by Heaven, nor by Earth, nor by any other Oath ; but, let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay ;* which seems to be a Caution against all *Oaths* whatsoever, in the understanding of some, but not in mine : nor do I think this Scripture is to be limited ( as some have thought ) to *Promissary Oaths*, in regard there is no word in the Text, or Context, to warrant such an Interpretation. Perhaps, that which is offensive in *Oaths*, consists more in the Circumstances or Formalities, than in what is by them essentially intended : I think therefore it would be a Provision worthy a *Christian Government*, and would be more satisfactory to those whom it concerns, than the Testimony of a *Peer* upon his *Honour*, ( Conscientious men deserving at least as much Credit and Privilege, upon their *bare word*, as the other by an empty Title ) if for an Expedient in this case, a Law were enacted, whereby the Testimony of those Persons, who are Conscientiously afraid of *Swearing*, may be taken for a legal witnessing of the Truth, by an attestation upon their word only, evidenced by some such action as the lifting up of the Hand, without the usual Formalities of an *Oath* ; upon the same Penalties which our Laws inflict on *perjur'd Persons* ; who deserve at least, the same Pains

Pains or Mulcts, which may befall to other men by their Falshood. This, I suppose, will displease no reasonable or conscientious man, in regard none ought to think that they are not in conscience oblig'd to Assert the Truth in Controversies between man and man, or in matters relating to publick Justice, or common Safety, when it tends not to an Accusing of themselves: And, I have this charitable belief of the greatest number of them, who make Conscience of *Swearing*, as aforesaid, out of meer Conscientiousness, that they will be more trusty in their Assertions, and more Loyal to the *Supream Power* (though it favour'd them not) upon their bare verbal Engagements, than the greatest part of them will be, who voluntarily take, or impose *Oaths by Compulsion* on other men. I am assured also, that G O D will not hold them guiltless, who by Threatnings, or by Oaths, or by Imprisonments, or Tortures enforce men to act against their Consciences, or to accuse themselves or other Innocents, in their distempers and torments. St. *Agustine* in his *City of God*, inveighs against it, as an abominable oppressive Cruelty, practis'd till then by none but Heathenish Tyrants ( and afterward by the *Beast* who sprung from them ) to enforce Innocents, against the Laws of G O D and *Nature*, unjustly to accuse themselves, and those whom they intended to destroy; whereas both *Divine* and *Humane Justice* directs to other means of discovering Truths, and vindicating of suspected Persons. The *Holy Ghost* wills, that every man before he suffers, should be tryed and Convicted by the mouth of *two or three Witnesses*; upon which Precept, the Law of our *Nation*, called the *Great Charter*, is founded:

M 2

And

And ( as it is exemplified in the Case of *Achan*, wherein the safety of a whole Nation was concerned and indangered by his private sin ) no man is to be interrogated as touching things which may tend to the accusing of himself, until there be either an Accuser produced, or a previous probability, in some degree, evidencing that he is guilty, as *Achan* appeared to be upon a *providential discovery* first made out, by *five Lots*, before it came to a *personal Examination*; and even then, *Joshua* proceeded not rigorously, or by menacings, but meekly, and by a Fatherly compellatur, said unto him, *My Son, give, I pray thee, glory to the GOD of Israel, and tell me, what hast thou done?* Whereupon, he Conscientiously confessed his Crime. In this temper of Spirit, it becometh all Christians to search out doubtful matters, and not by a tyrannous violence, in what hazard soever the Publick may appear, by the concealment thereof. This is my Judgment, whereto I will add what shall deserve to be well heeded at this time (to wit) That not only those Confessions or Accusations which are extorted by threatnings or tortures, are no proofs at all of what is Confessed against themselves or others; but that all these Informations and Accusations likewise, which Condemned or Guilty men are allured, tempted, or bribed unto, by hopes or fears, promises of pardon, favour, or reward, and not conscientiously declared, ought not to be regarded as a valid Evidence further than they concur with other Circumstances, and unquestionable proofs. For, they who are corrupted or distempered, by covetousness, hopes, fears, enforced necessities, or long and hard durance, will  
for

for the most part, say any thing to escape a present misery, as by sad experiments it hath been often seen. Even at this day (as I am credibly informed) there is a man living, who being thought murdered, a poor innocent man was hanged lately in chains as principal in the fact, and his Mother and Brother executed as Accessaries, upon the said man's Confession, when he was distempered to a degree of distraction, by hard durance, by the threatnings of the Prosecutors, and by his own fears and frailties; which were perhaps thought to be effects and evidences of his *guiltiness*. But, who can help this? or how or when will it be better, whilst *Oaths* are forcibly imposed? and whilst they who have no conscience are more indulged than the most conscientious men. I would to G O D that our Publick and Private Peace and Safety were no more endangered by *false Witnesses, Suborners of Perjury, Trapanners, Ignorant or corrupt Jurors*, (and by some of them, who impose Oaths against men's Consciences) than by them who make Conscience of *Swearing*.

I may seem perhaps to make tedious Digressions, impertinent to my first *Design*; but they are not such if well considered: for, I being like a Beggar who is never out of his way, might add much more (collaterally at least) tending to my first purpose, which I omit, partly, because it cannot now be born, & partly, for that I am not in such a capacity to express it, as assures me it is part of my work at this present; Therefore I will proceed with what I am certain to be, lest I be prevented (as aforesaid) by what I expect may shortly happen to the depriving me of those Tools and Opportunities, which I have at this time and place in my fruition. And, I conceive,  
that

that what I purpose next to treat of, will be so necessary toward the performance of those duties, for promoting whereof I have tendred the preceding *Parallel* to your consideration, that, neither all your experimental knowledge of *Good and Evil*, nor your *Historical Faith*, nor your *Formal Devotions*, nor the rest of your *supposed Virtues* or *Merits* will affect so much as may make them acceptable if that be wanting; in regard it is that, without which they will be unfavoury and fruitless. My Brethren, it is LOVE and UNITY in and with Him, who is the Fountain of that *Love* which must reconcile us to GOD and to each other; that, which must preserve us in safety, and destroy our Adversaries, who will else destroy us by our Divisions, whose *Unity* will so divide the *malignant City* and *Kingdom of Antichrist*, that they shall be instrumental for your deliverance by their own destruction; whereas they have hitherto prolonged our miseries and hazarded our destruction, by sowing and cherishing the seeds of division among us underhand; and under colour of reconciling you to your true Mother, sought to bring you by degrees back again to an acknowledging the *Whore of Babylon* to be the *Spouse of Christ*, and your *spiritual Mother*: Many also, who have not that wicked Design, are ignorantly contriving and prosecuting that, which may be a furtherance thereto, unless prevented. If any *National* or *Provincial Churches*, may warrantably arrogate that *Infallibility*, which hath been denied to *Popes* or *General Councils*, and which evidently appears they never had; then possibly, that whereto some drive, might seem feazible: But, it is not our or their politick endeavourings to establish that which is called



led *Conformity* and *Uniformity* in externals, that will settle a general Agreement in all Religious Concernments in the *mode* intended ; much lesse accomplish G O D's Work. *Unity in Essentials* is necessary, and ought to be prosecuted to the utmost of our ability. *Uniformity* and *Conformity* also in *Circumstantials*, might be expedients helpful toward an enjoyment of much outward peace, if they could be attained unto : But, if it be an *Unity* in Errors, or such a *Conformity* in things accidental or indifferent, as is not every way homogenet to and with the whole Mystical Body of *Christ*, or not adequate to the true Original Paterns, but intrenching upon the Christian Liberty in things indifferent, temporary and mutable, as occasion may require ; it would make that which is harmles in it self, to be hurtful by consequences ; that which is bad, to be worse ; and, as it may be established, prove a Confederacy and Conspiracy both against *Christ* and his Members, and destructive to the Priviledges of *Grace* and *Nature*, rather than a wholsom and lawful Constitution ; especially, if they who take upon them the contriving an *Uniformity* in Religious Doctrines and Disciplines, may be questionable, as to their *dependency* to their *Interest*, or to their calling to such a work, by having crept in at a back-door, or at a window, for ambitious or covetous ends. If such Edicts should be made and ratified, as men so qualified are likely to contrive, I know not what we had then to do, save only to act and suffer as G O D and our Consciences will direct ; patiently and peaceably waiting on him until he provides a Remedy.

*Unity*

*Unity* is a virtue beautifying, and securing; comely, and yet as terrible to the Adversaries thereof as an Army with Banners : But *Unifonmity*, is neither absolutely a Virtue, nor so beautiful, nor so securing at all times, as Variety and differing Forms, if they be orderly united upon a Foundation capable of them ; and not unseasonably or contentiously affected. He is an unskilful General who marches or fights always with his Army in one figure ; but he who puts it into several shapes, according as place and occasion requires, acteth like an able Commander ; A *Phaloux* will best endure the shock when opposed by numerous and furious Enemies, but *Batalias* formed into Bodies much differing from each other, will be most serviceable at sometimes. Variety of Forms in *Structures* render them more beautiful, more conveniently useful, and more honourable to the Founders, than those which are all of one shape, as we see in those Palaces which consist of unequal Piles and Turrets of differing forms, less and greater, higher and lower, round and square, and of the several *models* of Architecture, distinct and joyned, mixt and interwoven. The sweetest *Musick* is not an *Unifone*, but a *Harmony* made up of differing Instruments, Strings and Voices. The *World* had not been properly called *Kosmos*, but *Akosmos* ; not *beautiful*, but *deformed* ; Nor *man's body*, been termed a *little World*, or *Beauty*, if the various Creatures of the one, or the Members of the other had not consisted of Dissimilitudes, divers shapes and differing faculties, knit together into one frame, by a decent Simetry ; and made so to sympathize, that they might be the more serviceable to their Maker and to each other ; which could not have been, without  
variety

variety of *Forms* and Qualifications. If (as St. Paul saith) 1 Cor. 12. 18, 19. *All the Members were one Member (or all alike in form) where were then the Body? But, GOD hath made them all, as it pleased him, and many differing Members make one Body.* Even so also in the *Catholick Church of Christ*, which is his *Mystical Body*, there are many particular Churches true Members thereof, which in some external and circumstantial things differ from each other; There are diversities of Gifts, Judgments, Administrations and Dispensations; but all of them are of the same LORD, by the same Spirit, and GOD is the more glorified by that variety: To the consideration whereof, I beseech that GOD, so to direct and encline those with whom he hath intrusted the administration of *Civil Powers*, and the dispensation of his *holy Mysteries*, that they so intrench not upon the Priviledges of *Christ's Evangelical Kingdom*, to establish an outward Peace in their Temporal Governments and Jurisdictions by humane Contrivements, that, at last there be neither external nor internal Peace among them.

If all our *Judgments* and *Affections* were the same, and all men so alike temper'd, that they were universally enclined to the same temporal objects, in this estate wherein we now are, it would occasion more quarrels and mischiefs, than their disparity hath produced; *G O O D* and *E V I L* could not have been so well known as they are; Nor had we been *reasonable Creatures*, but had then lived and acted by *instinct* only, as Birds, Beasts, and other irrational Animals do, and there had been little or no use of *Love*, or of the other Vertues or Passions of the mind, to the Glory of *G O D*; at least, not

N

so

so much as hath been occasioned by the diversity of Judgments and Affections managed according to his *Word* and *Natural Reason* thereby sanctified ; nor indeed had we been more sinful or more righteous than brute Creatures, as it will be manifested when *Love*, the foundation of our *Being* and *Well-being*, hath repair'd those defects and flaws, which our Lufts ill-governed, and *Satan's delusions* have made in our *will* and *understanding*, by separating us from GOD, and from each other. *Schism* is that which hath so multiplied our sins and sorrows. I mean not that *Schism*, which the prophane and superstitious Enemies of Truth (confederating with *Antichrist* in his *Mystery of Iniquity*) chargeth us withall, because we separate from them ; for, that *Schism* or Separation, denominates us to be *Saints*; the word *S A I N T*, in the first acceptation, is *one separated from the world, from the Enemies of GOD's Truth*, from communicating with them in their Errors, Impieties, and Superstitions, and sanctified for his Service. That therefore, which I reprove, is that *Schism* which many of us have made in the seamless Robe of *Christ*, by a malicious separating from each other ; by such contentions and wickednesses as proceed out of self-conceit, self-will, pride and lufts, with a seeming respect to indifferent things, as essential to GOD's Worship, or to our own Eternal Happiness ; whereas they being but temporary advantages or disadvantages, do incline the heart to an uncharitable censuring, hating and persecuting those who dissent, though it proceeds from weakness or ignorance only, or else from their belief, that until they be unquestionably convinced in their understandings to the contrary, they

they are obliged to profess and act according to their own faith and knowledge, rather than to the faith and knowledge of other men, of whose wisdom and integrity they are not certain, whatsoever good opinion the world hath of them, or they of themselves; especially when they perceive it warranted in the Word of G O D, by such clauses as this; Rom. 14. 23. *He that doubteth (and acteth otherwise than he believeth he ought to do) is condemned; For, whatsoever is not of Faith is sin. Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth, or disalloweth.* On the contrary; Unhappy are they, who are seduced by their Authority and Power, who denying evident Truths in some cases (and being unrighteous also in their conversations) have made it justly dubious, that the things which they would enforce on them, are not according to G O D's Will. What conscientious person can suppose himself obliged to renounce his own Judgment of things which he believeth have their foundation in the *Divine Word*, to be guided by them, who practice not in their *deeds* what they profess in *words*? Who can confide in them, who neither entered into their Function, or the Sheep-fold, by the door; nor are of such a conversation, being entered, as becomes the place they execute; but are apparently vicious, ambitious, proud, covetous and cruel imposers of heavy burdens upon their Brethren? not only in things indifferent, as being absolutely necessary (though G O D hath left them at liberty to be used, or not to be used, as occasion should require) but enforcing some such also, as are evidently contrary to G O D's Commands, and other things which are so far from having being pra-

etified, or approved of by the Churches of Christ (as is pretended) that they are manifest appurtenances to the *Mystery of Iniquity*, or to the *Kingdoms of this World* rather than to *his Kingdom*, as they are also for the most part who impose them by constraint.

If the heart be so deceitful, that it deserves not to be trusted with what it is conscientiously perswaded belongs to the furtherance of its own happiness; how can it justly? or, why should it be compelled to trust upon what other men's consciences perswade it to believe? seeing he himself, and not another, must suffer what may thereby succeed. If we must depend upon the faith and knowledge of other men, and be obliged to such a Canonical obedience, as is imposed upon many; what need we trouble our selves to search further than to our Parish *Priest*, be he never so ignorant or prophane, since he is thought sufficiently qualified for the information of all those who are committed to his charge. If there be not a degree of Reason, and a proportion of sanctifying Light set up in every man, whereby he may see what he ought to do, and in what condition he is. What is then meant by the *hidden Manna* which Christ promised? or, to what use is the *white Stone with a New Name thereon written, which no man knows but he to whom it is given*? Verily, mens hearts are more deceitful to other men than to themselves; and therefore GOD hath not left us to depend wholly upon other men, nor would we should so hear them, as to adhere to their Judgments and neglect our own; But expect that we, as the noble *Bereans* did, should examine all *Doctrines* and *Disciplines* by the holy Scriptures, and trust other men no further than they teach agreeably thereto: And  
GOD

G O D having according to what was in them prophesied, ingraven so his Laws in the heart, that we may reade them there, we are not to despise the dictates of our own hearts, which *Solomon* tells us are *better than many Counsellors*, as doubtless they are, when grounded upon divine Precepts and Promises.

A time is near at hand, wherein Orthodox Teachers, will not so abound as Impostors ; and therefore I skrew into this *Epistle* as much as conveniently I can, to prepare for such a day, by encouraging men to preserve their Consciences from being vitiated by those *Mountebanks* which will arise. Be wary of such, and take heed also, lest that which you think to be a conscientious perswasion, be but an impression of Opinions begotten by delusions, or settled by meer custom and breeding only, or by an over-high esteem of their Knowledge and Sanctity, by whom you have been taught, which hath prepossessed many with a superstitious credulity to their great disadvantage ; as it hath fared with some, who having in their Childehood, heard foolish Tales of Cats being Witches, or of Witches assuming the shape of Cats, thereupon admitted and cherished by degrees such an Antipathy in themselves against those necessary Creatures, that they are distemper'd to swooning, when a Cat cometh accidentally into their presence, and could never be freed from that infirmity whilst they lived. That which may truly be called Conscience, hath no such causal or phanatick beginnings, nor terminates in ought which is dishonourable to GOD, injurious to our Neighbours, or harmful to the Soul of him who cherishes it, though it may bring troubles

bles upon the Flesh : which if it do, those troubles being patiently and meekly sustained, will evidence it to be a good Conscience rightly grounded, and improve the Sufferings, which it occasioneth, into Consolations ; whereas it is impossible, that an ignorant or pretended Conscience should endure much hardship or long-sufferings. Let us therefore, well examine and try our Consciences, and then not be afraid for any outward respect whatsoever, to profess unto others (when just occasions are offered) that, whereof we truly make Conscience ; seeing, by that means, if we be rightly informed, we may help rectifie the Consciences of our erring Brethren, or be an occasion of our own better information, if we have erred ; in the mean time it will be a tryal and exercise likewise of each others Meekness, Love, and Humility ; And, he whose Conscience thus inclines him, can never be thereby damnified, or want Consolation, whatsoever he suffers, though it may have some error in it through humane frailty. For, he that is unfeignedly conscientious of what he professeth, because he believes it is agreeable to the Will of GOD, (and will not therefore infringe it, through fear of any outward disadvantages, or for the enjoying of any temporary benefit) hath so much of GOD and of his Love in him (as also of Brotherly Affection) that if his *Judgment* be faulty, Love will rectifie it at last ; whereas, whatsoever his Judgment be, who wants Love and Sincerity, or conformeth to the Judgments of other men, meerly for external ends, it will be corrupted to his detriment, yea, though it were an approveable Judgment. The Truth which is professed, whereunto  
the



the heart is not inclined for its own sake, but, for some carnal respects, will rarely be sanctified unto any man, without much trouble in the Flesh, and affliction in the Spirit.

Therefore, to force or allure the Conscience by temporary baits from what it sincerely professeth in a peaceable deportment to the *Civil Power*, is a great Cruelty and Oppression ; and whosoever is guilty of that violence or insinuation, is like one of them, who was said, *to Compass Sea and Land to make Profelytes*, (or obedient Subjects) and did but thereby make Hypocrites, and secret Traytors; beget Children for the Devil instead of true Believers ; or Vassals for *Antichrist*, rather than loyal Leige-men to their Governours. Whatsoever they pretend unto, they thereby seek somewhat for their own advantage, much more than for GOD's glory, the publick peace of the Nation, or the Salvation of private persons. This is my Judgment, and will be until I shall be convinced to the contrary, and then I shall heartily recant it, (as I will all my other private Opinions upon those terms, in whatsoever I have Dogmatically declared, and offered to Consideration.) But, I yet doubt not of what I have averred, and am confirmed in my belief by what the LORD hath said by his Prophet *Isaiah*, to all those who tremble at his Word, and serve him according to their Conscience: *Your Brethren* (saith he) *hated you, and cast you out* (pretending it to be for GOD's glory) *for his Names sake* ; but he *shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed*, Isa. 66. 5.

Be not offended, if in some Particulars I seem not to be at present, wholly of that Judgment  
which

which you best approve of; for I shall be so at last, if it be truly approveable. In the mean time, by such necessary offences, the persons and things which are best to be approved, will be the better known; and though I dissent from some good-men in things indifferent (or in such as they think not indifferent) or though I may with-draw out of a conscientious respect, to others, from partaking with some Professors of Christianity, in that which I or other men conceive to be erroneous or scandalous; yet, an *Heretick* or *Schismatick*, properly so called, I hope never to be, because GOD's grace preserveth me from wilful averrations, and from infringing of *Brotherly Love*. Whether it be in Spiritual or Temporal things, I judge in the abstract, as I think the Word of GOD judgeth of them, leaving mens persons to him, and to those, unto whom a personal Judgment of them belongs; declaring my Conscience and Belief, as I think I am obliged to do without personal respects or dis-respects, that I might preserve concord, and incline other men to be like-minded toward me, and to each other; and I conceive I therein give no just occasion of scandal to my *Superiours*, or to the *Catholick Church*. When a City is first Incorporated, every man who had a Possession therein, or is afterward admitted to be a free Citizen, may therein exercise the Trade and Faculties which he had, as a Freeman, before there were *distinct Societies*, in the same, and cannot justly be dis-infranchized, or reputed a Transgressor, though he be none of those new *Companions*. I was admitted into the *City of GOD* before there were (to my knowledge) any *gathered Churches* therein, and I  
conform

conform according to my power and understanding to all the positive Laws of *that City*, living peaceably in concord with every *Fraternity*; and if all the distinct *Corporations* therein will receive me into their *Societies*, I will be obliged to be conformable to every one of them, so far forth as their *By-Laws* and *Orders* be in my Conscience agreeable to the Universal Laws of the *City of G O D*, and not repugnant to each other. For, I am not only a Professor of *Universal Humanity* and *Philanthrophy*, but also a *Jesuite* and a *Catholick Christian*. A *Jesuite* of the Society and Order instituted by our Patron *Jesus Christ*; not of that upstart Sect, lately and falsely so called and invented by *Ignatius Loyola*, for the service of *Antichrist*, under colour of that name. A *Catholick* also I am, but not a *Roman Catholick* (which is an absurd term, contradictory to it self) nor am I of any other particular profession, which may imply a repugnancy to Universal Truths or Duties; therefore cannot separate in Love from any; especially, not from those of any Church, who are in a possibility of being in *Christ Jesus*, though they are for the present entangled in some Errors; and I have as well a *Charity* for mine Enemies, as an affectionate Love for my Friends; not only desiring the Salvation of all those who profess *Christ*, by whatsoever Sect or Name distinguished (and of the prophane among them, reputed as Publicans and Sinners) but that *Infidels* also, *Mahumetans*, *Jews*, yea and *Antichristian Christians* (who are the worst of all men) might (if G O D pleased) come out of the *Malignant City* by Repentance into his *New Jerusalem*. And forasmuch as it is said, *He would that all men should be saved*; I would have them compelled

O

to

to come in , by all manner of loving *compellations*, and by preaching unto them the Universal Love and Mercy of GOD in *Christ Jesus*, by our exemplary good lives, as well in *deeds* as in *words*. To this end, I have much upon my *spirit* to be expressed; but, I reserve it to be inserted, in what I have begun to meditate upon the *more Excellent way*, mentioned by St. *Paul*, and for illustration of that *Universal Gospel*, which St. *John* in his *Revelation* informs us, an *Angel flying through the midst of Heaven*, was commissioned to preach: For, I have hitherto so long observed, and insisted upon expressing the ingratitude of *Mankind*, and the prevarications of the world, that I am as weary thereof as it is of me; and leaving her henceforth to her own wayes, without reproof, will spend the rest of my time (if my Pen be not taken from me) to magnifie that *Eternal Love*, by which all things were created, and which shall be in GOD's time manifested in the perfecting of what his Wisdom intended before there was a *visible World*. Mean-while I will proceed with what I have now in hand.

The General Love by me professed, as is aforementioned, so prevails with me, that I can communicate with the Members of any Christian Congregation (if they will admit it) to break Bread in remembrance of *Christ's Passion*, and in any other pious Duties, provided the Communicants be not scandalously prophane in their lives, or obstinate Professors of *Antichristian Principles* destructive to the essence of *Faith* or *Humane Society*; yea, though there be a surplufage or defect in some circumstances; provided also, my Conscience checks me not therein, for being a stumbling-block to other of my  
weak

weak Brethren : And I do ingenuously confels, that in some particulars wherein I practically comply not with others, I could do it without offending mine own Conscience, in respect of the things themselves ; if I be not enjoyned to acknowledge that is necessary which I think not so to be ; to profess I believe that which I cannot believe ; or, if I were not conscientiously fearful, I should thereby give encouragement to Superstition, and be a more dangerous offence to the weak ones of a contrary Judgment, than would consist with Christian Charity, the Glory of GOD, and mine own internal quiet. And, whether I shall at any time hereafter conform, or not conform to other mens Judgments in things controverted, in publick or private, I shall do it, or not do it, conscientiously in the fear of God, as my heart then inclines me (though it shall be to my external disadvantage) without contempt to Authority, or disrespect to any Profession. Nor will it much offend me, as in relation to my self, to be compelled to submit to things indifferent ; because, if that be a transgression, the fault is not mine, but their crime who compel that to be done as necessary, which is left indifferently to be done, or not to be done, as just occasion makes it expedient or inexpedient ; and when the doing or not doing of it, may advance the Common Peace, I prefer that, before my own private conveniences or inconveniences ; yea, before all things, except the Honour of GOD only. But, take notice, that notwithstanding this latitude of my Conscience, I am sometimes in as great straits in respect of the particulars afore-mentioned, as they who have the narrowest latitude, and shall in some cases

more willingly suffer, than do that which I have a liberty to do : But I will do as GOD directs me in every emergency ; and desire all my Readers to take heed, that they make neither mine, nor any other man's Conscience, an absolute Patern or President whereby to regulate their actions, till they be convinced by better Arguments than *Presidents* or *Examples*. Follow other men (as *St. Paul* said) as they follow *Christ*, and no further : for that latitude which is vouchsafed to some, is not given to all, nor at all times to the same persons in the same cases, but variously dispensed, and at no time justifiable in any, but when it is grounded upon the Law of GOD by Faith, and warranted by his holy Spirit, working in our hearts according to those Principles.

I again beseech you all in the Love of Jesus Christ (of whatsoever Judgment you are) to read without prejudicacy, what I have further to declare, tending (as I think) so Universal Concord, to the preventing what may disturb the peace of your private Consciences, and conduce to that Repentance and Reformation, whereunto I would persuade. It proceeds from no Phanatick Resolution taken up for mine own advantage ; nor from a partial respect or disrespect to any dissenting Parties, but is that which ever since I was of understanding I have judged reasonable, and been so conformable unto in my practice, that I neither gave just cause of offence to any, nor persuaded any to be of my Judgment further than their own Consciences inclined them. I much reverencing the *National Church of England*, without despising, or factiously adhering to any *Congregational Assemblies* ; and  
here-

heretofore conceived that *Set-Forms of Prayer*, as wel in publick as in private, were for many respects expedient at sometimes, for some persons, though not alwayes necessary for all men. I believed (as I still do) that such Prayers as were at any time dictated by the Spirit of GOD, were at all times accompanied and sanctified by the same Spirit, when any Congregation, or person, having the same occasions, did with a sincere intention of the heart, speak them unto GOD in the same words; and that they who assented unto those words with sincerity, offered up a Sacrifice pleasing unto GOD, though they were but formally only read by him who officiated as the mouth of the Congregation. I thought also, that such Forms as are enjoyned, might be helpfull to some, either to bring things needfull at present to remembrance, which might else have been forgotten, or to assist those who had not the gift of vocal Prayer in publick; or to help instruct the Ignorant in giving decent Attributes to GOD in their Devotions; or to stir up their own or other mens hearers in that Duty, by preventing such *Tautologies*, impertinent and undecent *Interjections*, or such deficiencies in words as may be offensive to their hearers, and otherwhile obstructive to themselves in the performance of that Duty. I judged likewise, that the Forms of Prayer publickly used in the *Church of England* were pious, and in few particulars justly to be excepted against as offensive, if not magisterially imposed as necessary for all, or formally only repeated, without a hearty intention; yea, I confess that I conceived the *Letany* (whereat much offence is taken) to be the best Patern of Prayer, as in respect of the  
*Form,*

*Form*, for a *Congregation* or *Family*, next to that which was prescribed by our *Saviour*; because consisting of many short *Petitions*, *Confessions*, and *Deprecations*, ( to be used as occasions are offered ) the *hearers* give assent to every one of them vocally at the end thereof; and are then, thereby kept the more attentive, and their minds more from wandering, than usually they are in a long continued Prayer; and for that it joyns together both the *Minister* and the *People* in their Devotions. Upon these and the like considerations, I had a reverend esteem of that *Form*, and of some other Prayers, notwithstanding their Objection, who say, the *Common-Prayer-Book* was taken out of the *Roman Missal*: For, though the *Papists* had part of it in their *Lyturgie*, to set a flourish upon their *superstitious Novelties* ( which Trash had buried under it that little whereof good use might have been made ) so much as the *Saints* and *Martyrs* retained at the time of *Reformation*, and which in effect was a Collection, for the most part, of what was in the *Greek* and *Roman Churches* before the *Papal* tyranny began, was not originally *Papal*, but by degrees mixt with such *humane Inventions*, as would not else perhaps, have been so soon and easily admitted; and I knew not wherefore (the Rubbish being again separated) but that the wholesome words might be as well hallowed to a pious use, as the *Censers*, wherein Incense had been offered up with strange fire, by *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and be re-sanctified by a sincere devotion, when it is needfull. Therefore, I was, at first exploding thereof, sorry it was not rather purged of what seemed offensive than quite taken away; and that it was not left to be



be used, or not to be used, as occasion might require, or as mens Consciences thereunto inclined them, without compulsion : For, I thought the sudden *Innovation*, then intended, would be unseasonable, and probably, as it was carried on, produce those or such like ill effects, as followed soon after ; which presupposal of mine, I publickly declared also, at that time, with as little thanks for my labour, as peradventure I may have for what I now express.

Yet, when I perceived many had made it an *Idol*, as others did of things no less necessary in their season than the *Brazen Serpent*, ( which was at first set up by GOD's Command ) I submitted to what his Providence produced at that time, who disposeth of all things, and permitted that Formality among other, to be taken away : Yet I knew by my own experience, and by what hath been confessed by some, endowed with more excellent gifts than I am, that GOD, who distributes his Graces as it pleaseth him ( partly, perhaps, to prevent spiritual pride, and partly, to encrease Love, by making each Member of Christ to need each other ; or, for some other cause known to himself only, ( as when he withheld that fluent vocal expression from *Moses*, which he conferred on *Aaron* ) doth not give to every Servant of his that confidence in their own abilities which may have, not such satisfaction in their own *verbosity*, that they can speak to him *extemporary* in the presence of an Auditory, though they are full of devout thoughts, and want not that gift of *internal Prayer*, which makes their silent mental Devotions, or broken expressions, acceptable unto him, and as effectual as *Hannahs* Whisperings were, of which

which *Eli* misjudged. And indeed, where there is the nearest communion in the closets of their hearts between GOD and the souls of his dearly beloved ones, they are more priviledged than the greatest Favourites of Earthly Princes (who make not their Petitions after the manner of other Courtiers) and being so ingratiated, that they are many times prevented in their desires by his free Grace, cannot set themselves at such a distance as they must do who petition in the ordinary mode; neither can they when there is need, so effectually pour out their hearts unto him in the formality of words, as by a *spiritual communication*, though they use words otherwhile, for the sake and example of others, who have not that way of *address*, and who may else peradventure think they pray not at all. In my own particular, it often so fares with me, that when my heart is fullest both of *matter* and of strong *desires*, to pour out all in words; I am so fearful to forget what is most necessary to be spoken for, that I can say little or nothing in words; yet have such prayers of mine been heard and graciously answered. If it were not so, many poor afflicted souls would be in a sad condition; and it may be that the declaring of my experience in this case, will be a means of consolation to some.

My private Prayers are for the most part, such; and when I am necessitated to be the mouth of others, Then (as many do who think it not observed) I heartily, not formally only, make use otherwhile of some formal words, both to help light my Candle, and to draw out of my heart by degrees, that which is in season for present occasions; And as the sweet favour of *Ambergreece* (which it naturally

rally puts not forth of it self) is drawn out by things added thereto which have no sweetness of that kind ; so otherwhile by those *Forms*, which are in themselves but dead Letters, that which lies unactive within us is quickened ; yea, sometimes the operations of the Spirit may be stirred up by a contemptible means, even in the most excellent Prophets of G O D , as it appears by *Elias*, who to rouse up his Prophetical Spirit, called for a *Fidler*, and it is said, 2 *King.* 3. 15. *That when the Minstrel (or Fidler) played, the hand of the L O R D came upon him.* Nevertheless, I desire not that any Forms of Prayer should be compulsarily imposed on those who need them not ; especially, not on them who are called to be Teachers and Speakers on the behalf of other men : For, though I my self have not that excellent Gift of *extemporary Praying and Speaking*, which becomes him who undertakes to speak to, or for a Publick Assembly ; I would not have such Places conferred on those who are not able, on all immergent occasions, to speak unto the People from G O D , and unto G O D for them on whom they take charge, either in fit words of their own, or in such of GOD's words as are stored up in memory : Nor do I think it reasonable, that men so qualified, should have their spirits confined to other mens words ; and perhaps otherwhile to such words as they cannot make use of with a safe conscience, though they seem pious and plausible unto many ; as for instance, when in our *Thanksgivings* or *Prayers* to GOD, we mention *Persons* or *Actions* with such *Attributes*, *Epethites*, or *Affirmations*, as we either doubt of, or believe to be untrue, or are not assured that they are approved of by GOD.

P

There

There may be no defect in the *Form* or in the *Matter*, to common appearance ; yet there may be some Complements in it, which every man's Conscience cannot brook ; and to enforce the use of *Set-Forms*, not prescribed by GOD in his Divine Worship, as necessary, whether it be on *Minister* or *People*, look (in my understanding) when it is pretended to be for their good, like bidding *Guests to a Feast*, and when they come, to constrain them to eat of all that is set before them, even more than they need, and that also which their stomach loaths (*one mans meat*, as our Proverb sayes, *being another mans poison*) and if it be refused, cram it down their throats, whether they will or not ; or else keep them prisoners, and strip them of that which they have about them. I also allow to every man his due freedom in things of that nature, that when I come to joyn with any in publick or private Prayers, I bring not with me to their discouragement, a censorious mind to judg uncharitably of defects in words or circumstances, but endeavouring diligently to observe what is spoken ( be it *extempory* or a *set-form* ) and whether it be spoken heartily, or cursorily onely (which concerns not me, but the Speaker) I do consent to the wholsom words of him that speaketh, in so much as I believe tends to the Glory of GOD and to our Publick or private necessities, passing by that which I think impertinent, as if it had not been spoken ; adding also secretly in my heart, an amendment or supply, where I conceive a defect striving against my own corruptions, if any uncharitable censure begins to rise up, by exercising my Faith and Humility, by which means that which had else been equivalent to a set-form of Prayer as to me,

me, is made my own *extemporary* devotion, though partly personated by another man : And by thus exercising the Principle of *Love*, I neither give just cause of offence for the present, nor disable my self to take opportunities to rectifie at another time, that which I thought not then approvable in him that prayed. When they in whose pious duties I was partaker, *kneeled*, I kneeled ; when they stood up or fate, I did the same ; the like in all other indifferent things, that *I* might not disturb their Devotions. Moreover, when heretofore in the Publick Assemblies, they rose up at the repetition of the *Creed*, *I* was not offended at it, but pitied their ignorance who did it superstitiously ; For, in the Primitive Times, that posture was often used in true zeal, to signifie to those *Infidels*, and others among whom they lived, their voluntary assenting to that *Belief* ; and (as *I* remember) it is recorded, that the *Christian Souldery* in those dayes, drew out their Swords, thereby implying that they would defend that Profession to the death, with hazard of their lives, if need were. Also, when the *Congregation* communicated in receiving Bread and Wine, *I* fate or kneeled as the rest did, without irreverence in sitting, or superstition in *kneeling* : For *I* kneeled not to adore the *outward Elements*, or the Table which is now termed an *Altar* ) but, to put my self into an humble posture of addressing my heart to *Jesus Christ* in Thanksgiving and Prayer : By which conformity, in such indifferent things, (which many superstitiously observe, and many as superstitiously omit) *I* preserved peaceableness in those who would have been disquieted, and otherwhile gained thereby an opportunity to rectifie the Judgments of

P 2

some,

some, who make the observation or not observation of such indifferent things, to be essential to their Religion ; and *I* am afraid that too many are only religious in the observing or not observing such *punctilio's* ; separating for trifles, and being ignorantly affected, or uncharitably disaffected, to the vexation of themselves and others.

Upon these and the like considerations *I* heretofore conformed to the Discipline of the Church of *England* (knowing in my own conscience, as *Paul* said of an *Idol*, that to me who made not conscience of worshipping thereof, it was not only no *Idol* but as a meer *nothing* ) so for such as my conscience would permit without offence to my weak Brethren ; supposing such Forms of Prayer or Discipline, as were continued or instituted by the first *Reformers*, when they separated from *Babylon*, were not contrivements of humane Policy only, the better to withdraw the People's hearts from *Romish Superstitions*, but sincerely established for the time being, in that mode, because they thought them edifying, or because it was not in their power to perfect their intention, or else (which is my Judgment) it was permitted so to be, because the Providence of G O D would ripen that work by degrees, as it might best advantage his Kingdom in the time to come, according to his permissions at the wearing out of *Jewish Ceremonies*. And, *I* thinking it my duty, to make the best use *I* could in my place, of that Faculty whice he gave me, to render such *humane Constitutions*, as *I* had not power to take away, more edifying & less superstitious, composed about forty years past, a *Hymn* for every *observable day* in the year, to prevent that superstitious observation,  
where-

whereby GOD was dishonoured in those dayes ; and to the like intent, conformed, as aforesaid, in some other indifferent things then practised, until that *Discipline* was interdicted ; and perhaps had so done now it is restored , but that *I* evidently perceived the Adversaries of *sincere Reformation*, (some of whom seemed to be Friends thereto) have laboured to enslave us to their Judgment ; and others, by the *old way*, to bring us back again to *Rome*, by drawing us a little nearer thereunto, by pressing that upon us, wherein we seemed at first to be separated from her ; pulling down, setting up, and adding what may advance their Designs under colour of repairing the old model of Reformation : And ever since that Discovery, *I* have desisted from that conformity, which *I* formerly thought a thing indifferent ; and as *I* lately submitted to the *Providence* which abolished that for a time, whereof *I* thought good use might have been made, so *I* shall gladly now do, if it be abolished for ever, with all the remainder of *humane Inventions*, which have been added to Divine Worship : For, though *I* have heretofore endeavoured to improve them, and (as you may perceive by what is declared) am not ignorant of the best use that can be made of them ; *I* now see men have made such *Idols* of their *Disciplines* and *Formalities*, that they are as meer dead things for the most part among all Professors. In words they are very zealous for observing the Sabbath, or Lord's day, Holy-dayes and other such Ordinances, but keep them not as they pretend they are bound in conscience. In hearing they hear not ; in praying they pray not as they ought to do ; for their businesses on those dayes,

are

are principally to see and be seen in their best clothes, to confer of their temporal affairs ; to hear news out of the Pulpit, or from other places, with such-like ; and their formal devotions are but fruits of a trust reposed in the *work done*, heedlessly hudled up, as the Papists do their *Pater Nosters* and *Ave Maries*, as if so, or so many Prayers repeated, or so many *Sermons* or *Masses* heard, were meritorious. Therefore, notwithstanding I yet see not in this my fleshly being, how the Soul of Religion can be preserved without some Form wherein it may be visible and active, I am nevertheless confidently perswaded ( and perhaps may therein be a Prophet to this Generation ) that GOD who is a Spirit, and to be worshipped in Spirit and Truth, will ere long destroy all external *Formalities*, but such as he himself hath ordained ; in regard his jealousy is as much provoked by our *Phanatick Idea's*, as by *Graven Images*. In the *Primitive Church*, I do not find either those Forms of Prayer, nor those Disciplines, nor that artificial mode of Preaching which is now in use, they came into fashion by degrees ; And I do believe, that though GOD hath permitted other Dispensations to be and continue a long time, and was also pleased to make them somewhat effectual for preservation of his *Truth* ; yet that Simplicity of *Worship, Preaching, and Praying*, whereby the *Gospel* was first planted, will be again received hereafter. Howsoever it pleaseth GOD to proceed, every man is obliged while such Dispensations continue, to be, so far forth conformable unto them, as he conscientiously believes them to be necessary or expedient for Edification ; and I for my part will husband them as well as I can with  
pre-



preservation of my obedience to GOD, and charity to men.

I resolve neither to separate from, or comply with any, but as their Doctrines and Disciplines are contradictory or agreeable to the Word of GOD in my understanding, in obedience to him, without wilful or factious disobedience to the Civil Power, or giving just occasion of offence to the *Elders* or Members of the Church of *England*, or of any particular Congregation within these *Islands* ; but what I cannot believe warranted, I cannot practise or profess, whatsoever penalty I incur. I conceive not the Church of *England*, or any other Church, to be so properly called the *Mother*, as the *Nurse* of those who are in them begotten and regenerated : Nor was I by Covenant at my *Baptism*, or at any time since to my knowledge, made a Son or Member of any Prelatical, National, or Congregational Society, but of the *Catholick Church* only. If I thought otherwise (and were not conscientiously perswaded, that it would be uncomely ( or somewhat worse ) to go back again to the door for an *Initiation* after I have been openly admitted to communicate at the LORD's Table ) I would be re-baptized ; therefore, I will conform to no Personal, National, or Congregation Judgement or Practise, further than I know it to be Catholick, and warranted to quadrate with necessary decency and good order, by GOD's Word and the Light which is in me, sanctifying through his Grace the talents of Nature. How other men ought to demean themselves, the same Light in them, assisted as aforesaid, will also direct ; and of their actings in things controverted, there can be no other competent

petent Judge but GOD. For, there is a Latitude by him vouchsafed to the Consciences of some persons, in some cases, to vary otherwhile from *General Rules*; as to the Children of *Israel*, in forbearing *Circumcision*, whilst they were in the Wilderness; to *Paul*, in Circumcising *Timothy*; as also touching some outward Conformities, in respect of the Civil Power, even in things injurious to their own personal Right, according to Christ's example, who paid tribute to *Cæsar* the usurper of his Kingdom. In great straits and necessities, that which is not lawful may be expedient, and therefore tolerated. It was unlawful for any to eat of the *Shewbread*, but the Priests; yet, *Mercy being better than Sacrifice*, *David* and his followers did eat thereof rather than perish by hunger; and *Reason of State* excuses not *Saul* from being a Murderer in slaying those who gave it unto them, in that necessity, though by the Arbitrary Laws of earthly Monarchs, it was adjudged Treason. Moreover, that Toleration which was desired by *Naaman*, appears to me approvable (though I was once of another Judgment) That *Affyrian Lord* being cured of his Leprosie, humbly desired, in respect of his nigh Relation to the King of *Affyria* his Master, who had sent him to be cured, that GOD would pardon him, when only to do his service to the King, he went with him to the house of *Rimmon*, if whilst his Master there leaned upon him, he bowed down, without intending any Adoration to the *Idol* (which I conceive was implied.) In answer to this request, the Prophet said, *Go in Peace*; which if it had not amounted unto a toleration according to his Petition, the Prophet in my Judgment, had  
neither

neither dealt faithfully nor charitably, to fend away one so likely to be a true Profelyte, with plenary satisfaction and instruction concerning his duty. *I* can neither excuse those who Magisterially burthen the People of G O D, with indifferent things as being necessary to his divine service, whilst they on whom they are imposed conceive them to be superstitious, and an infringement of their Christian Liberty; nor blame those who shall humbly, peaceably, and orderly plead to be delivered from their bondage, and obey in suffering: For though they may Authoritatively say, as the *Jews* did when they crucified *Christ*, *We have a Law by which he ought to suffer*, that may answer and be bold to say, G O D and Nature have Laws by which it ought to be otherwise. The benefit of those Laws *I* do modestly ( not factiously ) endeavour to vindicate, and will be as wary as *I* can, not to hazard Substances for Circumstances or Accidents, nor be afraid to glorifie G O D and confess *Christ*, in the same good words, which are formally used by wicked or prophane men, though *I* will not joyn with them in their intentions; but knowing that Truths and pious Words are sometimes used to deceive, will so far only conform to other mens Words and Actions as they are good in themselves, and as they may be turned to the Truths advantage in my understanding: Much less then will *I* make scruple to joyn with Christian men, in pious Expressions, and in indifferent Actions, though there may be a sinister intention in them, unknown to me, who am in charity to judge the best, where evil is not apparent. And, because *I* may possibly thereby take occasion sometimes to make that which was impertinently

Q

or

or superstitiously intended, both a means to frustrate that ill intention, and to improve a righteous purpose, as GOD doth, to glorifie his *Justice* and *Mercy* by our prevarications.

Therefore, as to advance the Glory of GOD, and preserve their own internal quiet, *I* exhort all men to be watchful that they neither act or omit the doing of any thing, but as they are conscientiously perswaded, until they shall be convinced to the contrary; So, *I* desire them for preservation of their outward peace, to be as wary, neither wilfully or factiously, or for sinister ends to refuse Conformity to the Ordinances of men, in such particulars as come within the extent of things decent, orderly, and well-spoken of by good men, and may conduce to Edification in Piety, or of Civil Concernments which clash not with Divine Constitutions. Be not afraid or ashamed to conform, if you have no better ground of dissent than your temporary advantage or disadvantage, or because you have heretofore acted and professed to the contrary, especially in such cases as may make it more obstructive to the Gospel of Christ, and to the improvement of Christian Amity, than by giving offence to some Brethren; when as many of another Judgment will be offended also, of whom you ought to be as conscientiously tender, in which case there will be need of much sanctified discretion. *I* likewise humbly beseech all those, to whom GOD hath committed the managing of Civil Powers, to be careful (if they would have men conscientiously obedient to their Civil Constitutions and Commands) that they intrench not upon GOD's Prerogatives and positive Ordinances, to  
the

the provoking of his wrath, by imposing on his People unjust or unnecessary burthens in Concernments Divine or Civil : or by giving those power to domineer over the LORD's Heritage, who pretend to be Pastors of *Christ's* Flocks under them, and may multiply, by their assistance, impertinent and superstitious Traditions and Ceremonies, till at last they, leaving nothing indifferent, bring the most part of Civil Causes into their Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions, and be destructive as well to the Supreme Civil Magistrates, as to the Estates, Persons, and Consciences of their faithful Subjects, by depriving them of their natural and spiritual Rights and Freedoms, one by one. That unnecessary cost which many thousands are, or may be enforced unto, by their Visitations, Inquisitions, Articles, vexatious Prosecutions in several Courts, their numerous exacting Officers, and by Bribes to supercede or take off the Process, Censures, and Mulcts, cannot be sum'd up ; besides the charge of all these, and those other burdensome Impositions laid upon the People since *Antichrist* got power ; Among the rest, that one of imposing the observation of *Holy Dayes* ( as they call them ) above the *seventh part of time* set apart by ancient *Christians* in place of the *Jewish Sabbath*, amounts yearly to an incredible sum, and by my calculation, to a greater burden than the *Excise*, and all other *Taxes* : For, it deprives the People of above the 12th part of those dayes, wherein GOD by the old Law allowed them to do what they had to *do* in their temporal Affairs : And if we could cast up into one sum, what the labour of every man, woman, beast, teem of horses and oxen probably ariseth unto in those

Q 2

many

many dayes, which are superstitiously dedicated to *Saints* and *Angels*, together with the sinful or vain expences which they occasion by drunkenness, gaming, and other vanities and mischiefs, during those dayes, it would appear such an *annual* charge (beside hindrances in Trading, and losses at Harvest and Seed-times) that being added to all the other Impositions, Services and Payments, lawfully, and unlawfully laid upon the *Nation*, it would, in my judgement, seem greater than ever was charged upon any People, who were not absolute Slaves; nevertheless, that superstitious observation was not to be murmured at, if it tended ought to the Glory of G O D, or but to the benefit of any part of *Mankind*, except those who are enemies to the Kingdom of *Christ*. That, such Oppressions might be prevented, and redressed when begun, GOD left not them, who should be Kings and Governors over his People at large, as the Kings of the *Nations* were, but gave them, beside many other exemplary Paterns of Righteousness, the Law of a *Just Monarchy*, in *Deut.* 17. 15. before the coming of *Christ*, and many Evangelical Precepts since, whereby they, and their Substitutes under them, ought to be regulated. And in all times, divine Providence hath raised up some, as well in the *Campe*, like *Eldad*, and *Medad*, as in the *Tabernacle*, to be *Remembrancers* of what ought to be done. They have also those *Ministers* of the *Gospel*, who, instead of those *Priests*, whose lips were heretofore to preserve knowledge, by whom they may, and ought to be assistant with their Counsel, which would not be in vain, if consulted.

But,

But, hereupon ariseth a *Question*, lately put to my Conscience, which may, perhaps, be of concernment at this time, if I could give a satisfactory answer thereunto; for which cause I will endeavour it so far forth as my Judgment extends. The *Question* is, Whether they who being called to a *Spiritual Function*, to minister in things relating to the Kingdom of *Christ*, and the divine Service of GOD, may intermeddle in the administrations touching the Kingdoms of Men, or in civil and common matters; seeing it seems to be an undertaking to serve *two Masters*, which may occasion the neglect of the one or of the other? I Answer; it may, or it may not be so, according to the mind and sincerity of the *Undertaker*.

The State of *Venice*, rarely admit any of the *Clergie* to be of Counsel in their Civil Affairs, because they are jealous of the *Popes* Interest among them: yet, I remember they had one, by whose wisdom and faithfulness, they were more advantaged, than by any one Counsellour that ever they had. But, this was a rare Bird; *Rara Avis terris, nigroque similima Cigno*. Many such are not bred at a time in one nest. The *Woods* yield few *white Ravens*, and as few *white Dawes* are bred in *Churches*; yet I have seen both. If he that is called to the Ministry of the *Gospel*, shall ambitiously desire wordly honours or profits, which he formerly enjoyed not; or shall not willingly for-go what he formerly possessed, when he is called to follow *Christ*, and finds it is, or may be his hindrance therein, he cannot, as I believe, with a good Conscience, either keep that which he had, or accept of other temporary Dignities or Profits. But,  
if

if he be born to any temporal honour or estate, or shall have them bestowed on him by his *Prince*, who may have need of his Service in the administration of *Justice* or of other *Civil Affairs*, without his own desire or seeking ; and conscientiously believes he may thereby the better serve his Master, *Christ Jesus*, he ought ( in my understanding ) to keep what we had, and accept of what is tendred, rather than reject it ; provided he be watchful that *honors corrupt not his manners*, nor his Riches choke the seeds of Grace ; and that when he serves his Prince or Country in a temporal capacity, he leans not to them and forsakes his best Master, making use of his additional power, to the disadvantage of *Christ's Kingdom* ; provided also, that when he serves his Prince or Country in a temporal capacity, he remembers his spiritual Engagement, that he humble himself into a *parity* with his *fellow Commissioners*, ordained by *Christ*, as meekly as if he had no temporary additions or priviledges more than they ; so totally laying them aside in the execution of his *spiritual Function*, that he may not over-awe them in their Votes, or so much as seem to think them any appurtenances thereto. Where this *Moderation* is with sincerity preserved, both GOD and the *King*, may be the better served ; then Peoples Christian and Civil Liberties be the more secured ; and both Parties be as mutually helped as one hand in washing the other. This, I conceive, is as lawful, and as agreeable to the will of GOD and a good Conscience ( with the *proviso*s afore-mentioned ) for preservance of the Civil politick Body, and of peace in the Church, as it was for *Jehojeda*, the High Priest, to intermeddle,

togeto-



together with his *Priestly Office*, in the administration of the *Civil Government*, for preservation of the King and Kingdom of *Judah*; or, as it was for *Paul*, and other Disciples, who officiated in preaching the *Gospel*, to exercise their Mechanick Trades for the subsistence of their bodies, which was less considerable than the well-being of the *Saints* in their bodily concerns. As there be no worse Counsellours than *Priests*, if they be corrupt and wicked; so, there be none better, if they be prudent and sincere; and therefore I grudge them not a *double honour*, who are approved such. But, when the most ambitious, and the most covetous self-seekers of a *Formal Ministry*, shall be only, or chiefly consulted withal, who endeavour the establishing of their own Ecclesiastical Constitutions, or *Papish Canons*, shall be joyned to a *Civil Government* by their own procurement, or by other indirect means, with persons who for the most part, wholly intend also the settlement of their *Politick ends*; there can be nothing expected but an utter overthrow of all the Foundations of *Righteous Government* both in *Church* and *Commonwealth*. This is my Judgment; which, if it may tend to produce as good effects as are by me intended in declaring it, would rejoyce my heart, though I were sure to die for it when it is published.

This *Paragraph* slipped in by way of Parenthesis, whilst I was prosecuting what I had to declare touching what is intended to be forcibly imposed upon conscientious men; upon which *Theame* I could alledge many things, both for and against what is affected and disliked, more than either of the *dissenting Parties* have (that I yet know of) said  
for

for themselves ; yet had not said so much, but that it thereby appearing I am neither partial nor ignorant what may be on both sides objected, I may be heard with the less prejudice on both sides, in that which I rationally and conscientiously declare ; who conceive the Controversies between them both at this time, to be more mysterious and ridiculous, than heretofore the Contest was between the *Greek* and *Roman Churches* concerning the Festival of *Easter*. These are only my Caveats and Hints ; wherein the manifold Confusions, both in matters Divine and Civil by me observed, and the multiplicity of my Musings thereupon, make my Expressions also to be confused ; yet peradventure they may startle some into a more serious consideration of them hereafter, if they do no more. In the mean time, GOD's Word, Christian Prudence, and your own Consciences, must be your Guides, to which I refer every man, hoping it will be better weighed than it hath been ; and that they will take heed on all sides, that their Consciences be not deluded, feigned, infringed, palliated, or byassed to the right hand or to the left, but as they shall be reasonably convinced : For, we are likely to be in a great strait ere long, which will try who hath Faith and Constancy, who are truly conscientious or hypocrites ; where injustice and oppressions abound, there can be no true Love ; where *Love* is not, there can be no *Repentance* or *Peace* ; and where these are not found, Confusion, Despair and Destruction will take place. Nor the dissembling of our Condition, nor our pretending things which are not ; nor our discountenancing of Truth, and countenancing of Lies and false Rumours, and fictitious Prophecies,

whether

whether it be on the behalf of our private Interests, or of the Civil Government, or of G O D, will avail us for good, but be of evil consequence? To such wicked Vanities, I find very many over-prone at this time, and well-pleased with publication of that, which they believe to be false and erroneous, so it may advantage that whereunto they are inclined. And for prevention of what these and such like prevarications may effect, my Conscience compels me to insist so much on the foregoing particulars, and on those *Interjections* which are occasionally and suddenly cast into my heart, that probably I shall be blamed for transgressing in *Tautologies*, *Pleomasmes* and defect of *Method*, and may also bring upon my self an increase of troubles in the flesh, by so plainly expressing *what I am*, and *what comes into my mind*, rather than omit what I think necessary, or not clearly expressed that which I suppose fit to be offered to consideration at this *Critical time*: Yea, and some tell me, to whom I have communicated these Papers, that it will make many of those to fall from me, by whose Charity I have been hitherto relieved in my present necessities. But, *Non nobis nati sumus*, we are not born for our selves only; and if I suffer hereby, I shall be well contented with G O D's Pleasure therein; who, though his *Promises* do often seem to clash, and run cross to his *Providences* a long time, (for the probation of our *Faith* and *Constancy*) will make them to meet at last in the compleating of that which will be most for his Glory, and the true happiness of all who depend upon his Word.

Such a wicked spirit of *Division*, *Vengeance* and *Persecution* is active, to their intolerable oppression

R

who

who serve GOD according to their Consciences ; and such a defect both of *Christian Love* and *Humanity*, even among those who profess the same *Jesus*, and of some who are *Pastors* of his Flocks, that they make it a Principle of their Association, and as it were essential to their *Function*, to endeavour by any means whatsoever (whereby they incur not the penalty of humane Laws) to suppress all those by violence, who are not conformable to them in *Doctrine* and *Discipline*, even to the maintaining in practice ( though they openly profess it not in words) of this Maxime of the *Papists*, That *Faith* is *not to be kept with Hereticks* ; and do their utmost to provoke the *Civil Magistrate* to draw the Temporal Sword against them, and thrust them into the Fire ; whereas the Apostle *Paul* adviseth, that such as are obstinately incorrigible in things justly reprobable, should only be cut off from the *Congregation* of *Saints* by the *Spiritual Sword*, and as it were pull'd out of the Fire by the holy violence of a loving Zeal, that if possible they may repent and be saved both in Soul and Body ; yet many, against whom their hot-spirited Brethren are so violent, as being setters up of *New Lights*, do set up no other *Lights* than such as were set up in the seven *Golden Candle-sticks* in the seven Churches of *Asia*, when they were at purest ; and not such *Candles* without *Light* or lighted at noon-day, as are set up in many places. Some have much wondred what inclined them to that useles practice ; and to inform them, I will declare, what I conceive to be the reason thereof ; They have some *Juggling part* to play, which they would not have the common people discover : For, you seldom see *Puppet-playes*, and such Mymical  
Con-

Contrivements presented but by Candle-light, the better to obscure their secret Conveyances. Their common plea of *Antiquity* for their *old Lights*, is fallacious: *Error* may plead it in many cases as well as *Truth*, though truth derives a pedigree far more antient than our modern or most antique Superstitions; which are not so antient as *Heathenish Idolatries* from whence they sprung. Nay, many of them are meer *Novelties*; and therefore all right-principled men, who are persecuted for their *Non-conformity*, adhere in their belief and practice to the written word only, according to their understanding thereof ( when they have discharged their Consciences ) in professing their Faith to GOD and their *Consciences*, in which he hath his Tribunal: For, hoping, that they who dissent from them in Judgment, profess that which they seem to believe, to no self-end, but only, because in their understanding it accords with the revealed Will of GOD, they dare not intermeddle to judge between GOD and them, nor be the less affectionate unto their persons, though they are in some points deluded for the present. This temper of spirit I have endeavoured to cherish in my self toward all those who dissent from me in Judgment; and that we may be one in *Love*, preserve a Christian Fellowship with the Members of every Congregation professing Faith in *Christ*, who are not scandalous in their lives, or maliciously wilful in those dividing Principles which are destructive to *Piety* or *Humanity*. In requital whereof I have had large testimonies of the like affection to me from some of every *Christian Society*, by their late seasonable Charity; yea, such a considerable number of

R 2

persons

persons at this time in this *Nation*, differing from me and from each other in Judgment, have seemed so to center in the *Principle of Love*, by their affectionate, as well as charitable respect to my Person, ever since I was deprived of my Estate and Liberty; that, considering my unworthiness (that the tenth part of them were not formerly of my Acquaintance; and the multitude of other necessitated persons, who are more nearly to them related) I do much mind it, with much thankfulness to GOD and them, and more joyce in it for their sakes than for mine own; because, I hope it is a Symptom that this *Virtue* will more encrease, to the Glory of GOD and their Consolation, by our Afflictions and Persecutions, than it did by our temporal Prosperity and carnal Peace. Not long since (as I publickly declared in a *Poem* tending to the Prosecution of this work) I thought I should have been as lonely as *Elias* thought himself, but GOD hath made it appear, that he hath many Servants in this *Nation*. And my desire to render this precious *Oyntment of Love* more diffusive among men, hath made me so copious in words, and seeming *Digressions* upon this subject; wherein, as *Paul* said of himself, 2 Cor. 15. 13. *Whether I am beside my self, it is of GOD; or whether I am therein sober, it is for your cause.* And as the same Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 9. 19. *Though I be free from all men, I have made my self a servant unto all, that I might gain some of all* Judgments; denying or allowing to my self those things that are lawful, so far forth as they are expedient for the edification of others, and no further. Let us all endeavour the same thing; and, if we desire Peace with

with G O D and among our selves, make *Love* a *medium* to that Repentance and Reformation, which is expected, by considering that the wisest among men, *know but in part*, ( by labouring to imitate *Christ*, in his Life, Meekness, Love, Patience, Forbearance, Long-suffering and Humility, as well as by making a verbal profession of his Doctrines ) and by seeking with mildness to reclaim those who erre in Judgment or Manners ; not persecuting, tearing and destroying them, for failings which they see not in themselves, which they would hate if they saw them, and for which we ought rather to commiserate, than afflict and oppress them. They were *Disciples*, who were so zealous, that they would have Fire called down from Heaven ; but, their Master *Christ*, reproving them, said, that *they knew not of what spirit they were*. Judge your selves, not others ; but, as *Paul* adviseth, forbear to judge them *in respect of Meats or Drinks, or of an Holy-day, or of the New-moon, or of the Sabbath ; which were a shadow of things to come, whose body is Christ*. Nor let any ( as he counselleth in another place ) *beguile you of your reward, by a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, &c. Philip. 2.* Nor by any of those *Ordinances* of men, which, as I said before, come within the extent and meaning, of *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, or the like ; but *put on, as the holy elected of G O D, bowels of Compassion, Meekness, Humbleness of mind, Long-suffering ; and above all other, Charity, which is the bond of Perfection : and let your Conversation be such as becomes the Gospel of Christ*. And, as that Apostle advised, Phil. 4. 8. *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever is honest, just,*  
*pure,*

*pure, lovely, whatsoever is well spoken of* ( that is by good men ) and whatsoever is necessary to preserve the *Common Peace*, and *Brotherly Concord*, in the fear of G O D, and in obedience to his Truth, *think on these things to do them*: For, you are thereto obliged ; and whilst you do so, ye shall neither fear, nor need to be afraid of your Adversaries, or of what is feared these later times will produce ; because *that fearfulness will be an evident token of Perdition to them, and of Salvation to you in G O D, on whom you have confidence, that, he who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it, until the day of Jesus Christ.*

*Mercy and Love* to others will incline G O D to be merciful to our sins, whereas by defect of Love and Mercy in us toward others, we shall be liable to Judgment without Mercy, by a self-condemnation. They, who think to do G O D acceptable service, or to have a happy accomplishment of their own ends, by persecuting those who serve G O D according to their Conscience and understanding, do but *kick against the pricks*, as *Paul* did when he was *Saul*, a persecuter ; and stumble upon a Stone of *offence*, upon which they will be broken into pieces, if their hearts be not changed, as *Paul's* was. Also, when they expect G O D should forgive them their Trespases against him, they will fail of their hope : For, how can they perform the condition of their pardon, by forgiving those who Trespass against them, when they prosecute a Brother for those offences which he commits not against them, but, in their opinion, against another, who, for ought they know, is rather well pleased, than offended at what they judge an offence. This  
kind



kind of trespassing against our Brethren, will bring us within the compass of those horrible Maledictions, which are prophetically pronounced against such persecutors in the 109 *Psalm*; and therefore let us take heed of it. Tyrannizing over the Conscience is a sin, which I do not find the *Jews* to have been charged withal until the coming of *Christ*, and when their general Desolation approached; nor that the *Gentiles* were often guilty thereof, until the Worlds *Grand Monarchs* usurped an Arbitrary Sovereignty over the rest of *Mankind*, and would be reputed Gods; not then, until *Nebuchadnazzar's* time; nor among *Christians*, until *Prelacy* ( which sprung from *Heathenism* ) brought into practice, to settle their Novelties, with their Usurpations of those pompeous *Pontifical Dignities* which they found in *old Rome*, and have continued by Oppression and Persecution, ever since the power of the *first Beast* mentioned in the *Revelation*, was transferred to the *second*: And they are such sweet morsels to flesh and blood, that the Best *Reformed Churches* ( as they call themselves ) are loth to let go the Rags and Reliques which some of them at first had, and do yet retain of those of Carnal *Dignities* and *Perquisites*; but preserve as much of them as they can in *specie*, or, in *disguized Forms*, persecuting, more or less, to uphold their *Diana*; which is a sin so destructive to that Peace, Repentance, and Reformation whereto I would perswade, that (judging uncharitably of no particular Person, Congregation, or National Church, though I conceive of their defects and sins, as I believe the Word of GOD judges of them ) I will proceed one step further, to signify what

what I apprehend thereof, and of what *Classis* I think them to be, which is plainly this.

*Whatsoever* Person, Persons, Congregation, or Society of men, or National Church, or Civil Government, shall be so espoused to his, or their own Judgment, Will, Formalities in Discipline, or Profession of Doctrines relating to the worship of G O D, as to arrogate Infallibility to themselves, and shall thereupon endeavour by humane Policy, by the temporal Sword, or by any other way than by the word Preached, and by such Disciplines as are thereby warranted, to enforce other men to conform to those Doctrines or Disciplines which they please to establish and profess, though it be the Truth, until they are convinced in Conscience, that it is so: Or, whosoever shall Constitute a Ministry of the Gospel, otherwise than is ordained in holy Scripture, either by setting up such Officers as are not thereby Divinely Authorized, or by casting out, or silencing such as Officiate according to the Primitive practice of Christians: Or, whosoever shall act or combine with others, to set up, or destroy, or uphold any Civil Authority, to the Disturbance of the Common Peace, under Pious and Religious Pretences, otherwise than the Laws of Nature, and of the Nation, do allow: Or, having gotten power of Compulsion, shall enforce any, contrary to their Consciences, to comply with them therein, or to submit to their Commands further than by a Passive Obedience: Or, whosoever shall make their Congregational or National Sanctions, which relate to G O D's Worship only, to be unduly Instrumental for advance of their personal Power, Estates or Preferments, Temporal or Spiritual, by over-awing  
their

*their Brethren, or otherwise than is agreeable to divine and humane Justice ; or, to a purposed excluding of those from the like advantages, meerly because they are of differing opinions from them in Religious Controversies, though in fundamentals of Divinity and Humanity, in their Prudence, Manners, and in all other respects they are as capable of that Trust, as other men. All such, whatsoever shew they make of Christian Piety, or true Morality, are ( in my Judgment, though they carry not the Mark of the Beast in their Foreheads ) in a degree, more or less, for the time being, Confederates with Antichrist, and Members of that Divided Kingdom, and Malignant City, which must be destroyed, and help destroy it self, so far forth as the Temporal Sword, meer humane Powers and Policies, will be useful to that purpose. The Work of the Saints consisting only in their Constancy, Patience, Love, and in the exercise of such-like Spiritual Weapons ; especially in the sincere Love of GOD, and of each other, grounded on his Eternal Love to Mankind in his Son, King Jesus ; which Love —*

When thus much was Printed, a part of the Copy was lost at the Printing-house, which could not be supplied without sending privately that which was left to the *Author*, in whose hands both this *Supplement*, and the rest of the Copy, was seized in his Chamber. The Providence of GOD must be submitted unto, and we doubt not but the Remainder will shortly come to our hands, either from a Copy which is said to be sent into *Holland*, or by another which is in a Friends hand that will keep it safe. And perhaps, when they in Authority have perused what is seized, and see how innocent a Piece it is,

S

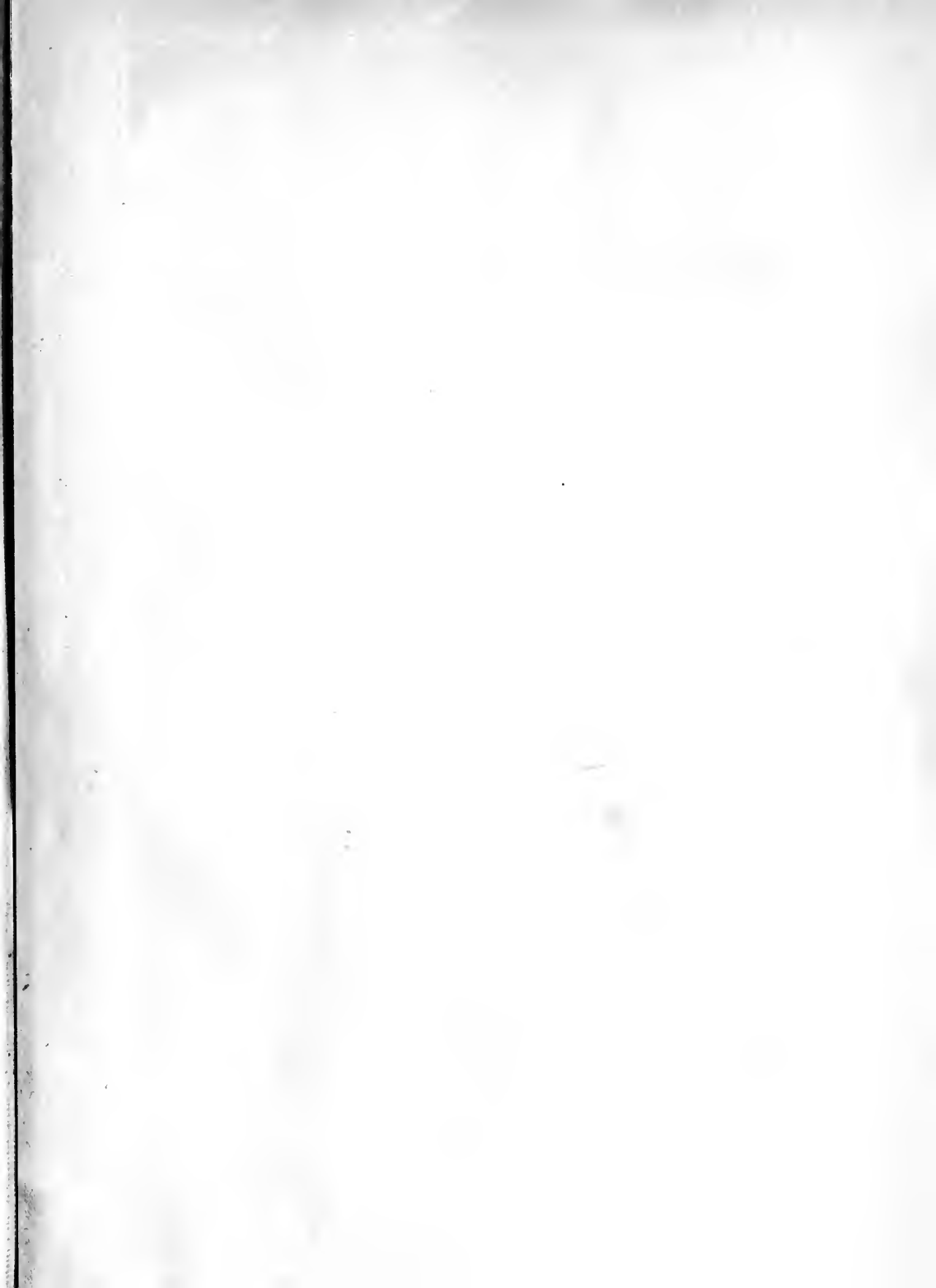
and

and how much it tendeth to the Glory of GOD, the Honour of the King, and the Settlement of the Common Peace, it will be returned back to the *Author*, that it may be made publick; this is the hope of good men who have seen it, unless for our many sins GOD shall justly deprive us of that means, which he graciously intended to bring to the knowledge of the King and People, those things which are pertinent to their joynt Consideration at this time, for prevention of his further Wrath, and the Judgment deserved. That which is wanting, amounts to about seven or eight Pages; and containeth Particulars of much concernment, not mentioned in the Title; Among which, that considerable Mystery of the *Reign and Kingdom of Christ upon Earth*; and what is to be believed thereof, is stated, so far forth as Man is capable of it in this fleshly being; so that none who are principled aright therein, will or can, with a good Conscience, think that the Weapons or Militia of that Kingdom are carnal, or that the Kingdoms of the Earth and Antichrist, are to be destroyed by any such Instruments in the hands of the Saints; which being well Considered, would have been advantageous to preserve the Common Peace. So *Farewel*.

---

F I N I S.

---





PR  
2392  
P3  
1882

Wither, George  
Paralellogrammaton

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

